

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF
BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

BOUND TO MAKE HIS MARK
OR RUNNING A MOVING PICTURE SHOW
AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man
AND OTHER STORIES



"I wonder what's keeping Duncan so long?" said Carter to Miss Leslie. The words were hardly out of his mouth when the double entrance doors were suddenly banged open and Duncan dashed out, hatless and in a state of great excitement.

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BOYS' MAGAZINE

NOVELS

PRICE 7 CENTS

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

Issued Weekly—Subscription price, \$3.50 per year; Canada, \$4.00; Foreign, \$4.50. Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 160 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as Second-Class Matter, October 4, 1911, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

No. 875

NEW YORK, JULY 7, 1922

Price 7 Cents

Bound to Make His Mark

OR, RUNNING A MOVING PICTURE SHOW

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—A Curious State of Affairs.

"The Savoy has gone out of business again," said Duncan Scott to Sam Hickey, manager of the United Film Corporation.

"The dickens it has," ejaculated Hickey, evidently surprised by the information.

"I found it closed at two o'clock with a sign displayed reading, 'For Sale. Apply to William Jackson, No. — Prospect Avenue.' There wasn't a soul on the premises, so I went around to Jackson's flat, on Prospect avenue, to learn what the trouble was, but I couldn't get in. I rang the bell three times without result."

"That place must be hoodooed, for Jackson is the fifth man who has tried to make it go in the last six months."

"That's all rot. There's no such thing as a hoodoo."

"Then how do you account for five people, one right after the other, failing to keep it open with our films, which are the best in the market? We put out the product of a dozen of the best companies, and there's hardly one that isn't a hummer, whether it's a one, two or three reel subject."

"I can't account for it, for the neighborhood is well populated and the people are not slow in patronizing the movies. The Criterion in the block below is always crowded, I've heard, and judging from the announcements are running many inferior films—that is, inferior to anything we supply, and have supplied to the Savoy at any stage of its existence. The same conditions obtain at the Crescent, two blocks above. That is all the opposition the Savoy has to contend with. With our line of films I see no reason why Jackson shouldn't have done a land office business."

"What did he do before he bought out the Savoy?"

"I think he was in the real estate business."

"Just so. It seems to be the impression that anybody can run a moving picture show successfully. I know of a butcher, who would hardly have thought of embarking in the grocery or stationery business, who took to the movies like a duck to water. He fitted up a place in a new neighborhood, and expected to make money from the jump. After running for several weeks, and losing money after the second, he sold out to a man who answered his advertisement. In a month the new proprietor was doing first rate, and the last I heard of him he was putting money

away every week. He had the instincts of the showman, while the ex-butcher hadn't."

"I don't believe that Jackson was handicapped on account of having been in real estate. I've seen and talked with him a couple of times a week since he took hold of the Savoy, and he struck me as a man adapted to the movies. I dropped in several times when the show was on, and I found a paying crowd there. I hung around and heard the comments on the films, and they were generally favorable. I figured that the show was striking its gait under Jackson, so you can imagine what surprise it was to me when I saw that sign this afternoon. I nearly dropped."

"As I'm not a mind reader, I can't surmise what the trouble is. You say you called at his flat and couldn't get in?"

"Yes."

"Maybe there's been a mix-up between him and his wife. Many a man has found himself in unexpected difficulties for that reason."

"Admitting such to be the fact, I don't see why it should cause him to close up a business that gave every prospect of proving successful."

"I don't know that it should. I merely advanced the suggestion without knowing whether there's anything in it or not."

"The unexpected closing of the Savoy shuts our films out of that neighborhood, so I got after Spencer of the Criterion again, and tried to induce him to come over to us, but he wouldn't hear to it. He says he's doing all right with the line he is using. In any case, he says his contract holds him to the Vitrix people."

"When does it expire?"

"He wouldn't say."

"How about the Crescent?"

"They take from the trust, too."

"Well, keep your eye on the Savoy, and don't let the new man get away from you."

"I won't if I can help it."

That closed the interview, and after hanging around the office a little while, Duncan Scott left. Duncan was a smart boy who, after losing an office position downtown, through no fault of his own, was hired by the United Film Corporation as one of its business solicitors, and had made good. He had been with this company several months, and was well up in that particular branch of the moving picture business. He had also had opportunities, through occasional visits to the studios of the film producers, to familiarize himself in a general way with the methods by which

moving pictures were made. He had made the acquaintance of the leading professional people, male and female, who, by their artistic efforts, had contributed to the success of the films handled by the corporation that employed him. Among these he counted Richard Carter, leading man, and Miss Morna Leslie, leading ingenue and character artist, as his particular friends. As he was walking up the street he met Carter.

"Hello, Duncan; off duty?" said Carter.

"Yes, for the present."

"Anything new?"

"The Savoy movie I told you about which changed hands so often, and I thought was coming out all right under the new owner, Jackson, has closed again."

"You don't say. Gone under again, eh? It seems to be an unlucky house."

"I can't see why it should be unlucky."

"I think the facts speak for themselves. How many times has it failed?"

"Five."

"And all inside of a year?"

"Inside of less than six months."

"Worse and worse. If I were looking for a motion picture plant, and was offered that place cheap, I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole."

"Think it isn't lucky?"

"Lucky! I should say not. There's a good healthy hoodoo in full possession. The only thing that place is good for is to be turned into a shop. What was it before it was made into a movie?"

"It was a large grocery store."

"Did the grocer fail?"

"No. He's got another store in the next block."

"Why did he change his quarters? Do you know?"

"His lease ran out, and Benson, the man who originally fitted up the place as a motion picture house, and named it the Savoy, offered more money for the store than he was willing to give, so he had to move."

"I guess he didn't want to move if he was getting on all right. Naturally, it hurt's a man's business to have to change his quarters. I'll bet he laid a sort of curse on the place to get square, and that's the cause of all the trouble."

"Pooh! I don't take any stock in that sort of thing."

"Well, I do, for I've seen it work."

"You imagine you have."

"No imagination about it. Two years ago I had a room with a family in an apartment house. The family underneath were English. The lady got into a scrap with the physician who occupied the first floor over a pet dog she had. The result of the tangle was a notice was served on them by the landlord to move. They moved, but the landlord never could rent that flat—at least not as long as I kept track of the house. Before that he never had an apartment idle two days. In fact, he had a waiting list. A few months later another apartment voluntarily became vacant, and it was taken right off the reel, but though dozens of persons looked at the apartment over the doctor, nobody took it. Everybody thought it was awfully funny, for it was really the best apartment in the house and worth the rent asked. It finally became the talk of the house and that the English woman had cursed

the place because she was dispossessed, and the opinion so grew that a tenant never could be found to take it," said Carter.

"Then you think the grocer did the same thing when the landlord raised his rent, and, as he wouldn't pay it, he was obliged to move his store?"

"I have an idea he might have done something like that to get square with the landlord."

Coming toward them, Duncan saw Norma Leslie and a professional friend. The four came together and expressed the pleasure they felt at the unexpected meeting. Duncan was introduced to Norma's friend, Miss Maud Fuller.

"Where are you folks bound?" asked Carter.

"Nowhere in particular. We're just talking a stroll before dinner," said Miss Leslie.

"Then turn back and accompany us," said Carter, pairing off with Miss Fuller and leaving Miss Leslie to Duncan, which just suited that lad, and maybe the young lady as well, for he was a bit smitten with the young and pretty actress.

In the course of the walk Duncan told Norma about the continued ill-luck attending the Savoy moving picture house.

"Dear me, those men can't know much about the show business," she said. "I never heard of an amusement place going under so often in such a short time under different managers."

"Well, Benson, the man who fitted the place up, struck me as a capable man. I secured his custom for the United Film Company. When he sold out, without giving any reason that I heard of, his successor continued with us. I had no difficulty in holding his successor, the man after him, and finally Jackson, the present proprietor, in line. It is very singular what the trouble is with the show. It certainly wasn't the films, for we never put out a poor one; nor did it appear to be the lack of patronage, for that neighborhood is able to support three movies. Some of the people go every night. The boy who works in the same block with the Savoy told me that Jackson turned people away Saturday and Sunday nights from both shows, and yet the place was closed at two this afternoon, and bore the sign 'For Sale.' I am satisfied there is something very odd back of it, and I am going to find it out if I can. The house closed just as suddenly each time, without the least indication beforehand of what was going to happen," said Duncan.

"Almost mysterious, isn't it?" laughed Miss Leslie.

"It is kind of mysterious when you come to think of it. I'm going to call on Jackson to-night and ask him what the trouble is—if I can see him."

"If you find there is anything unusual in the case you must tell me, for I dearly love mysteries."

"I wish I were a mystery, then," said Duncan, nervily.

"Dear me, why so?" exclaimed Miss Leslie, not catching on.

"Why, you said you dear—I mean you remarked that you were interested in mysteries, and so—that is——"

At that moment something happened.

CHAPTER II.—Duncan Distinguishes Himself.

Around the corner swung a motor car. A pretty and stylishly-dressed child of eight, holding on to the hands of a maid, had just left the curb to cross the street. The chauffeur of the car saw their peril, shut off power and blew his horn. The maid uttered a scream, let go the hand of the little girl, and jumped out of the way. The child, paralyzed with fright, made no move to follow her. The machine swooped down on her in spite of the brake, and she would have been knocked down and run over but for quick action on the part of Duncan Scott. He sprang forward, seized the child in his arms, and as he was in the act of trying to clear the machine, was struck and thrown a dozen feet away. Miss Leslie uttered a scream, thinking he was killed, and Carter rushed to pick him up.

A crowd began to gather in a twinkling, and the machine came to a stop. To the surprise and relief of the beholders, Duncan, after rolling over two or three times, with the child closely held in his arms, sat up and then rose to his feet, apparently uninjured by the shock. At that moment a gentleman pushed his way through the crowd and rushed up to Duncan as he was placing the frightened child on her feet. He grabbed the child in his arms in a convulsive way.

"Effie, Effie, my darling, are you hurt?" he cried, in a tone that expressed his feeling.

"Papa," cried the girl, throwing her arms around his neck.

"Are you hurt, tell me?" he repeated.

"I'm so frightened," was all he could get out of her.

However, it was soon found that she was not hurt in the least. Then the gentleman turned to Duncan.

"My brave lad, you saved her life. I can never thank you enough. Tell me your name, that I may know to whom I am under such a great obligation."

"Duncan Scott," said the lad, while Carter was brushing the dirt and dust off his clothes.

"You are a splendid fellow, young man, and I won't forget what you have done for my little daughter. Here is my card. Call on me to-morrow."

Duncan took the card and looked at it.

"Arthur Westbrook," it read, "No. — Wall Street, New York City. Westbrook Motor Company, Findlay, Ind."

"Now don't fail to call on me to-morrow any time between ten and four," said Mr. Westbrook shaking Duncan by the hand again and starting across the street with Effie in his arms to meet the maid, who looked anything but happy.

"By George, old man!" said Carter. "You got out of that by an eyelash. Ye gods, what a scene for a moving picture machine! The director would have had a senario written around it, and a corking good number would have been turned out. You are the hero of a lost opportunity."

The crowd, which was still growing bigger, regarded Duncan with great interest. Only a few of them had seen the sensational incident, but an idea of it was passed from mouth to mouth. The chauffeur, finding that the young fellow was not hurt, took advantage of the conversation be-

tween Duncan and Mr. Westbrook, to return to the machine and get away, hoping to avoid arrest. After the car was gone a policeman came along and, forcing his way into the crowd, reached the spot where Duncan and Carter stood. He learned all the facts from them, took them down in his notebook, together with their names, the little girl's and her father's. Then Duncan and the actor rejoined their ladies on the sidewalk. After Norma Leslie recovered from her scare at seeing the accident, and perceiving that Duncan was not hurt to all appearances, she was filled with admiration for his plucky act.

"Oh, I am so glad you escaped!" she exclaimed, seizing him by the arm, and flashing a look of intense interest in his face. "You are a real hero, Mr. Scott."

"Thank you for thinking so, Miss Leslie. Such commendation from your lips fully repays me for the risk I took," replied the young fellow, giving her a look that brought a whole bunch of roses into her cheeks.

"Are you quite sure you are not hurt in the least?" she said, with some anxiety in her voice and eyes.

"As far as I know I'm not," he answered. "I regard myself as very fortunate in not being a candidate for the hospital. When the car hit and hurled me ahead I hardly knew anything for some moments. It was an awful shock. Just as if a house fell on you. I say that without knowing just how it feels to have a house to fall on you, for I have never experienced the sensation. On the whole, I have no overwhelming desire to repeat my performance even for the benefit of the moving picture business in which I naturally feel a great interest."

"Allow me to congratulate you on your fortunate escape, Mr. Scott," now put in Miss Fuller, who had been itching for a chance to express herself.

All women love a real hero, and actresses are no exception to the rule, even if accustomed to being in continual touch with stage heroes.

"You are certainly a brave young man," continued Miss Fuller, gushingly. "I do love anything sensationally heroic in real life. I am sure I shall see you in my dreams to-night repeating your rescue of the little girl. Such a thriller could never be introduced into a moving picture without a dummy."

"The dummy would have my sympathy," laughed Duncan.

Miss Fuller was showing so much interest in Duncan that Norma began to experience a feeling of jealousy, and, tugging the lad by the arm, suggested that they had better go on. Miss Fuller, however, wasn't to be shaken off. She hung on the other side of Duncan, which put Carter on the outside of the four, and they proceeded in that way for a block when Carter, feeling that he was being slighted by the lady in whom he felt a special interest, remarked that he guessed he and Scott wouldn't go any further, unless the ladies particularly desired their company. Miss Leslie hailed this as a chance to get her friend away from Duncan, though she would have tried to hang on to the young hero had she had him all to herself. She and Maud Fuller were dear friends or chums, it is true, but there was danger at that moment that Duncan

Scott might prove the rock on which their friendship would split. Norma had suddenly awakened to the fact that Duncan was a whole lot more to her than was Maud Fuller. She had admired him in a general way before, but now she wanted to assert a proprietorship in him to the exclusion of anybody else.

At the same time she was perverse enough to desire to be won by a regular siege, holding the object of her interest in suspense until she finally capitulated to "the sweetest story ever told." But with Scott showing a polite interest in Miss Fuller, and her dear friend using the full battery of her charms upon him, Norma scented danger, and the "green-eyed monster" that sleeps somewhere in everybody's heart began to arouse itself and take notice.

"Come, Maud, we must hurry, or we shall be late for dinner," she said. "Good-by, Mr. Scott, I am awfully glad to have met you this afternoon, and I hope we shall——"

"Oh, don't mind, Norma," interrupted Miss Fuller. "We have lots of time, Mr. Scott. We don't have dinner till half-past six, and even then there is no certainty that it will materialize on the minute. The old dragon we are boarding with is growing more careless about meal hours every day. She's had a grouch on ever since Billy Day, the comedian, vanished with his suit-case by way of the fire-escape, leaving a two weeks' board bill unsettled. She watches the rest of us now like a hawk, though I am sure Norma and I owe her nothing. I suppose it is because she suspects Tessie Stewart is going to skip if she can get her trunk out. I know Tessie hasn't paid up this week. Tessie is in hard luck. After resting three weeks she caught on at Zammerstein's this week. But, poor thing, her turn was a frost at the matinee on Monday and she was cut out of the bill."

Miss Leslie, however, was determined to get her friend away from Duncan, and as Carter sided with her, the party broke up and Duncan and the actor crossed the street and turned down. Three blocks further on they separated, each going toward his own boarding-house. Duncan lived with a Mrs. Jenkins, a professional boarding-house lady, whose establishment was generally always full of steady people, consisting of three Sixth avenue clerks, two young lady stenographers who roomed together, and were both smitten with Duncan, though he was not at all interested in them, two married couples, and two or three widows living on their incomes. Everybody knew that Duncan was connected with the moving picture industry, and the three clerks regarded him with envy because they believed he was making easy money and had easy hours compared with their own.

They didn't know that the boy was more or less always on the job, for he was ambitious to make his mark in the world, and he had to rely wholly on his own exertions. There is no more sentiment in the moving picture industry than there is in any other kind of business, and he had to earn his money to get it. His father and mother were alive, but they lived in a small city up the State which did not offer inducements sufficient to keep the boy at home. New York has always been the Mecca of his hopes, and he had now been in the metropolis a year and a half.

CHAPTER III.—Duncan Interviews Jackson.

After dinner that evening Duncan started uptown to call on Jackson, proprietor of the Savoy. The Criterion was in the block below and was brilliantly lighted up when he reached it. Spencer the owner was outside, looking at his display of paper. He knew Duncan well, as the boy had tried to secure his custom for the United Film Corporation and failed. He also knew that Duncan had kept the trust out of the Savoy. He grinned at the boy this evening.

"The Savoy has gone up the spout again," he said.

"I know it."

"That's pretty good evidence that your films don't take in this neighborhood. The people are discriminating and want the best."

"It isn't on account of inferior films that the Savoy closed up."

"What then?"

"That's what I came up to find out."

Spencer laughed derisively.

"Do you want me to tell you?" he said.

"Yes, if you know."

"It's because the Crescent and this place fill the bill. A third show is not wanted. We two pull the people. There aren't enough left over to fill a third show."

"That's funny. I heard from a party who knows that the Savoy turned people away from both shows last night."

"And to-day he's trying to sell out. Say, did you ever hear of any one who was anxious to get out of a paying business?"

"I can't say that I have."

"Jackson is either trying to do it or he isn't making the place go. Common sense indicates that the last is the true reason."

"I admit the inference is in line with your statement, but I don't believe it is the true reason why Jackson has thrown up his hands. I have a suspicion that some kind of a jinx is responsible for the singular sudden closing of the Savoy. I'm going to see if it can't be caught and put out of business."

"The place is a Jonah. It's what the French call *de trop*—that is, in the way. My show and the Crescent cover the ground. The Savoy will never go as a moving picture theater."

"If I had the money I'd open the place myself and prove to you that your statement is false."

"You'd be the sixth unfortunate."

"Would I? I'd make your show and the Crescent hurtle to keep your doors open."

"You're talking rag-time, young man."

"All right. Maybe the next owner will catch the jinx and prove my statement. Good-night."

Duncan walked on. He found a number of people in front of the Savoy, which was dark, reading the "For Sale" sign and commenting on it. He tried the two doors and found them locked. He had hoped to find Jackson on the premises, but he wasn't. He passed the Crescent and found the public flocking into it. He turned up the next street, and in ten minutes reached Jackson's flat. This time when he rang he got admission, and walked up to the third floor.

"Is Mr. Jackson at home?" he asked the servant.

"Yes; come in."

Jackson had evidently not been home long, for he was eating his supper.

"Hello, Scott," he said. "Take a seat. Have a glass of lager?"

"No, I don't drink. I came to learn why the Savoy isn't open, and also why it is for sale. I thought you were doing well."

"Well, I have been running to good business. Last night the house was jammed to the doors at both shows; but at noon to-day I decided that I was needed more in Chicago than I was here, hence the sign. Know anybody who wants to buy? I'll sell out cheap."

"I never heard you speak of Chicago as an attraction before."

"It is a better show town than New York."

"That's new to me."

"And it's my old stamping grounds."

"Why did you buy the Savoy then?"

"I expected to remain here, but matters over which I have no control altered things."

"The four previous owners of the house all gave reasons on a line with yours in explaining why they wanted to cut loose from the Savoy. The five of you have each run the place something less than a month. This rapid succession of managers is a mighty singular thing in the face of the prospects the house held out. Are you sure you haven't some other reason for giving up?"

"Of course not," said Jackson, but Duncan didn't believe him.

"I'm afraid you won't find a purchaser as easy as the others did."

"Why not? The Savoy is bound to make money under the direction of the right man."

"But you're not a blacksmith at the business."

"No, I flatter myself that I understand the show business."

"What do you want for the place?"

"I'll take \$3,000, or even less, from a quick buyer."

"If I had \$2,500, I'd make you an offer."

"Can't you raise half among your friends and advertise for a partner?"

"I'm afraid not," replied Duncan.

"Get me a man who will put up \$3,000 for the Savoy as it stands, and I'll give you ten per cent. of that amount," said Jackson. "There's a chance for you, but you've got to move lively."

"I'll see what I can do for you. There was a man in our office the other day who is looking for a moving picture theatre."

Find him and bring him up here to-morrow at one."

"Will you be at the theatre?"

"No—here."

"If I found you a purchaser it would be better for you to meet him at the Savoy. It would save time, for you'd have to take him there, anyway."

"You remarked that I wouldn't be able to find a purchaser as easy as the other owners did. What makes you think I won't?"

"Because the house is getting the reputation of being a Jonah. That's what Spencer, of the Criterion called it to-night. If intending purchasers learn that, you won't be able to sell at any price."

"You said if you could raise \$2,500 you'd take

it over. That doesn't look as if you thought it was a Jonah."

"I don't. I believe it has a jinx, though, and the first thing I'd do would be to find it and send it to the morgue."

A sickly grin spread over Jackson's face for a moment.

"Somes jinxes can't be got rid of so easily," he said.

Duncan gave him a sharp look.

"Then you admit it has a jinx?" said Scott.

"I admit nothing."

"Come now, own up. What kind of a jinx is it that's got control of the Savoy?"

"No jinx at all," answered Jackson, hastily. "All the place needs to make a success is a man who knows how to run it right, and has a little money behind him."

"Benson, the man who fitted the place up, filled the bill in that respect, yet he seemed glad to sell out in a month. Smith, who bought him out, had money and moving picture experience. He told me after he was there four days that the Savoy was going to prove a gold mine. Ten days later the house was closed and Smith was looking for a buyer. I don't know much about his two successors, but I did think you'd make it pan out. You haven't kept it open a day longer than Smith. You can talk as you like, Jackson, but there's some mystery behind all this. You don't want to admit it because you're afraid you'd queer your chances for selling out. Well, I don't blame you, if you're determined to sell, but no mystery would frighten me off from the Savoy if I could find the cash to buy you out."

"You think you could smother the jinx, eh?" said Jackson, with another sickly grin.

"I've got a level head and don't believe in jinxes in the way some persons do. Sailors and theatrical people seem to shy at the least thing in that line. The stories of stage hoodooes I've heard would make a book, and most of them would make a horse laugh. Even baseball players can see a jinx in the bat-bag if the team encounters a sudden batting slump and can't explain it away. Why, I was hit by an automobile to-day and knocked ten feet or more. I suppose some jinx was responsible for that."

"You were lucky. Where did it happen?"

"Corner of Broadway and Thirty-eighth street. I saved a little girl from getting run over."

"Played the hero, eh? How came the little girl to get in the way of the machine?"

Duncan told him all the particulars.

"Her father's name is Arthur Westbrook. I've got his card in my pocket."

He pulled it out and showed it to Jackson.

"Westbrook Motor Company," read the owner of the Savoy. "That's a big automobile company. I've seen their plant out in Findlay. It covers a city block. Look here, Scott, if you saved that gent's daughter from getting run over he is surely grateful to you. It ought to be a cinch for you to negotiate a loan with him to set you up in the motion picture business. If I were you I'd strike him at once for \$5,000. I'll sell you the Savoy for half of that, and you'll have the chance to fall back on and fight the jinx."

Duncan shook his head.

"I couldn't ask him for a loan even to buy out the Savoy," he said, getting up to go.

Five minutes later he was on the street, but somehow or another Jackson's suggestion followed him all the way downtown to his boarding-house.

CHAPTER IV.—Buying A Hoodoo.

As Duncan had business which took him down to the vicinity of the post-office, he found time to go to Wall Street about eleven and call on Arthur Westbrook. He sent his name in and was immediately admitted.

"Glad to see you, Scott. Take a seat," said the gentleman, who was acting as Eastern representative for the motor company his father was president of and chief stockholder in.

As Duncan entered he pulled a letter out of a pigeon-hole and laid it before him. It bore the signature of Jackson, owner of the Savoy. That astute individual had seen the account of Duncan's exploit in the morning paper, and decided that he would put the boy in the way of getting the money necessary to buy him (Jackson) out. The particular reason he did this was because he feared that the Savoy would be hard to sell under existing circumstances, and he was anxious to get it off his hands at the earliest possible moment before the newspapers made comment on its Jonahesque properties.

It was a nervy and impudent thing to do, but then Jackson was equal to anything except continuing the management of the Savoy. He put a special delivery stamp on the envelope, and Mr. Westbrook received it shortly before Duncan called. He was a bit surprised at the nature of its contents, which ran as follows:

Mr. Arthur Westbrook—Dear Sir: Excuse the liberty I am taking in the interest of a young man who I see by the morning paper has rendered you a very great service. This young man is, as you know, Duncan Scott, of the United Film Corporation. He would like to buy out a moving picture theatre I am about to dispose of, but he has no money. The place is easily worth \$3,500, for it is in a crowded neighborhood, and everybody goes to the movies two or three times a week, nowadays, but I will let it go to Scott for \$2,500, because I take an interest in his success. He ought to have \$2,500 to hold as a reserve fund, though I hardly think he will need to draw one more than enough to get things moving. Now if you will force a loan of \$5,000 on him for six months at six per cent. interest, you will do him a business favor without costing you a dollar. When I say force I mean it, for he won't ask you for it under any circumstances. He told me he wouldn't accept money for doing his duty. Some people are built that way. As I have several offers under consideration, I trust if you can see your way to giving Scott a lift that you will lose no time about it. I want to see him get the theatre, as I know he wants it, but I can't allow sentiment to interfere with my business, for I am due in Chicago next Monday.

"Respectfully yours,

"William Jackson,

"— Prospect Ave."

"I called as you asked me to, Mr. Westbrook," began Duncan. "I hope your little daughter suffered no material shock after the accident."

"None at all," replied Westbrook, cheerfully. "She feels as grateful to you as a child of her years can be expected to do. So also does my wife, who was much upset when she learned of the occurrence. We had to discharge the maid, for we cannot afford to keep a girl in charge of our little one who is liable to lose her presence of mind in any emergency. Of course, we understand that the maid didn't mean to expose our Effie to peril, but we relied on her to protect the child, which she failed to do, and but for you our little one would probably have been killed. I hope you will understand that words cannot express our gratitude to you; it would therefore greatly please me if you mention some way that I could be of service to you. I would like to testify my appreciation in some substantial way."

"I can understand your feelings, Mr. Westbrook, but there is no occasion for you to feel bound to do me any favor. I have a fair position with the United Film Corporation, in the motion picture trade, and I am getting along all right."

"But you saved my daughter at the risk of your life. In fact, you were hit by the machine, which I understand the police are looking for in order to arrest the chauffeur, and you must have suffered from the shock."

"I am thankful to say that the shock was only a momentary one, though it was not a sensation I would care to have repeated. When I saw your daughter in such imminent peril I acted on the spur of the moment, for I hadn't a moment to consider the risk. I believed it was my duty to act as I did, and it is repugnant to me to accept anything that savors of recompense for risking my life for another. That is one thing I regard as above price."

The gentleman tapped the letter reflectively.

"You say you are connected with the motion picture business?"

"Yes, sir."

"In what capacity?"

Duncan explained the duties of this position.

"Have you ever thought of running a moving picture theatre yourself?"

"Yes, sir. I hope to some day."

"Are you capable of managing such an establishment now?"

"As I have been constantly visiting such shows in the line of my business, and have taken note of the methods followed by the different managers, and have talked with these men a hundred times, I think I am competent to manage a show. I have had opportunities to see motion pictures developed from the first stage upward, and know exactly how they are produced. Of course, all this knowledge would not necessarily make one a successful exhibitor. A man must have the instincts of a showman in order to cater successfully to the public. He must be able to judge what will take in his particular neighborhood. He has got to have the knack of pleasing all the people all the time. This is no easy job when you consider the diversity of tastes a moving picture manager is up against. Fortunately the companies that turn out the films aim to reach the same result. The motion pictures of to-day are

a vast improvement of what they were a year or two ago, just as the phonographs of to-day put it all over the machine of ten years ago. But I mustn't take up your time, Mr. Westbrook. You are doubtless a busy man, and I, too, have my work to look after."

"One moment, if you please. Have you a motion picture house in your mind that you would like to buy out?"

"I admit that if I had the price and a little over, I would buy the Savoy movie way uptown."

"What is the price the owner wants?"

"He wants \$3,000, but he offered it to me for \$2,500. He has promised me a ten per cent rake-off if I can find him a buyer at the former price."

"You consider that the Savoy is worth \$2,500 as an amusement venture?"

"It couldn't be duplicated for that money anywhere. The decorations are unusually good, much superior to its nearest competitors. Its seating capacity is 400, with standing room at the back and sides for approximately 100 more. Altogether it is a good example of a first-class motion picture house."

"It is doing good business, I suppose?"

"It was until Jackson closed it for some unexplainable reason."

"Will you accept the loan from me of a sum sufficient for you to buy this theater and start it?" asked Mr. Westbrook.

Duncan regarded him with some surprise.

"I haven't any security to offer you for it," he said.

"Your note of hand is enough. It can run for six months, without interest, and should it not be convenient for you to pay it then, I will renew your obligation in that form."

"I wish to help you to realize your ambition of owning a motion picture house, which doubtless will prove profitable under your management. Shall I make the note out for \$5,000? That will give you a sum to held in reserve."

"I will accept \$3,500. If I can't make the house pay from the start I shall be very much surprised."

"Very well; but if you should need more money, I hope you will ask me for it."

The note was made out by Mr. Westbrook and signed by Duncan. The gentleman then drew his check, payable to the order of William Jackson, for \$2,500, at Duncan's request, and a second check for \$1,000, payable to Duncan Scott or bearer. Duncan then took his leave, promising to keep his patron advised of his headway as manager of the motion picture theatre. He cashed the \$1,000 check at Westbrook's bank, and took the money uptown with him. Promptly at one o'clock he appeared at the Savoy and found Jackson outside.

"Well," said the proprietor, "have you done anything toward getting me a customer?"

"Yes. I have raised the money to buy you out."

"I expected you would."

"Didn't I tell you I wouldn't ask him for a loan?"

"Yes; but he offered it to you of his own accord."

"You seem to be a pretty good guesser."

"I am," chuckled Jackson.

"It's too bad you didn't guess what was going to happen when you bought this place out."

"That's right, but I didn't. You want to go inside and inspect the house, of course. Come on, then we'll go to a lawyer and have the transfer effected in legal form."

Donald went all over the establishment, and found that it was in full working order, ready to be reopened at any moment.

"If you want to hire my ticket seller, the machine operator, pianist and other people, I will give you their addresses," said Jackson as they stepped into the little box office. "I owe nobody anything. I will transfer my lease to you and you can pay the landlord his rent when he comes around next week. The rent is——" here Jackson named the amount. "Here are my books. Sit down and run over them. They contain a complete record of the receipts and expenses of the show since I've had the house. You will notice as you go over the books that the balance is in favor of the theatre."

"That only emphasizes the fact that you had some remarkable reason for closing up in a hurry."

"Well, never mind my reason. You may have better luck."

"I hope so," said Duncan, looking over the record of daily receipts. They began low and gradually increased in volume.

"You have brought the purchase price—\$2,500?" asked Jackson, after Duncan finished his inspection.

"Yes."

"Then we will hunt up a lawyer and put the matter through."

A lawyer was found and the deal consummated. Duncan handing Jackson Mr. Westbrook's check, which he had had certified. When the transfer was completed and Duncan had the key of the Savoy in his pocket, he turned to Jackson as they came out on the sidewalk, and said:

"Now that you are out of the Savoy, and have your money, there is no further reason for you to conceal any mystery that you have found out in connection with the theatre. I expect you will enlighten me on the subject."

"I have nothing to tell you except—the house is hoodooed."

"When did you find that out?"

"Yesterday at noon," said Jackson, with a shifty look.

"It must be something mighty serious to cause you to close up right away on top of the fine business you showed to last night."

Jackson shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't think it fair on your part to leave me in the dark when you can enlighten me. Forewarned is forearmed, and it would be a friendly act on your part, now that I have relieved you of what seems to have unexpectedly become a burden to you, to forewarn me so that I may know what to expect and take precautions toward protecting myself."

"When I bought my predecessor out he did not forewarn me. He unloaded the show on me and never breathed a word about the hoodoo. I have told you more than he told me—that the place is hoodooed, I need not have told you, but I have. I threw up my hands the moment I saw how things were going. If you can lift the jinx

you will have a gold mine in the Savoy. That's all. I wish you luck, but I'm afraid you'll close as suddenly as the rest of us have been obliged to do, in which event lose no time in finding some sucker with \$2,500 and get out from under."

Thus speaking, Jackson walked away like a man relieved of a load, leaving Duncan Scott with plenty of food for thought.

CHAPTER V.—Trying to Find Out the Jinx.

"Well," said the boy, looking after Jackson, I'm forewarned in one respect—that I'm up against a mystery of considerable proportions. So the Savoy is hoodooed. It will have to be a mighty healthy hoodoo that will get my goat," he muttered, squaring his jaws aggressively.

He walked down to the theatre, unlocked one of the doors and went in. The big room looked dark and lonesome with its double row of seats and the aisle between, facing the square white canvas on which the films were projected. Two double doors opened off the side aisles, with red electric globes about them, denoting that they were emergency exits. They were secured by heavy bolts that could be drawn in a moment, and they opened outward. There were two windows in the rear, but these were closed in by shutters and hidden from sight by the screen, underneath which was a raised platform about a foot deep. At one side was a closed upright piano with a chair for the performer. Above the box-office, which curled outward into the entrance corridor, and had a glass front where the ticket seller sat, was the left where the picture machine stood with its accessories. It was fairly roomy up there, and was reached by a narrow flight of stairs connecting with a door.

The lights were controlled by a kind of "governor" inside the box office, and easily reached by one standing just outside the door. Benson, the original proprietor, had installed the lighting arrangements on a somewhat different plan than usually followed, as he had his own ideas on the subject, and he could produce special effects. Some of these effects were necessary, and though he had explained them to his successor, that individual had never used them, and when he sold out in his turn had not called his successor's attention to them. Jackson had noticed the small levers at the back, wondered what they were there for, but did not investigate their utility. Duncan had merely glanced at the "governor" in going over the place. He was familiar with the ordinary lighting of motion picture houses, and he did not consider it necessary to inspect it. Duncan found writing materials in the office, and he addressed a postal card to each of Jackson's late employees, and asked them to call on the following day at noon. This done he considered his plan of operations.

He was afraid that the several closings of the house had given the place "a black eye" in the estimation of the public, though he didn't believe that that would amount to much, since the Savoy was a very comfortable and attractive theatre, much superior to either the Criterion or the Crescent, and he did not doubt with the line of films furnished by the United Film Corpora-

tion but the public would flock in right from the start. As he reflected over the situation it suddenly struck him that the appearance of the jinx had, in each case, occurred just as the Savoy was striking a prosperous gait. Benson's career had been the shortest of the five, and the singularity of it was it had been the most prosperous, according to his books. The new house was not viewed with favor by the proprietors of the other two theatres that were enjoying a monopoly of the patronage. Naturally, they scented a dangerous rival in the field.

When Benson suddenly closed down, the owners of the two rival houses shook hands and congratulated each other. Duncan thought he saw the wool of a nigger in the woodpile, so to speak. And yet his suspicions could hardly cover the case. If any crooked business had been attempted against the Savoy the proprietor would most certainly have put up a fight against it. No man is going to tamely submit to be buncoed out of a good thing. Whatever this mysterious jinx was, it appeared to have the power to close the house whenever it chose to do so, and without encountering any opposition from the manager, who, in five separate instances, had meekly folded up his tent and given up a promising proposition. Duncan was a lad who, when his rights were attacked would fight to the last ditch.

As he sat there in the little box office and went over the extraordinary record of the motion picture house, he gritted his teeth and once more breathed the defiance that it would "have to be a mighty healthy hoodoo that would get his goat," and he meant it. His watch pointed at half-past two when he recollected he had had no lunch. He had a healthy stomach, and that organ notified him of the omission. There being nothing to detain him longer at the theater, he locked up and went to a restaurant in the next block close to the Criterion. There he saw Manager Spencer of the Criterion taking a light lunch with an acquaintance. He grinned at Duncan.

"Has Jackson sold out yet?" he asked.

"You'll have to ask him," replied the lad.

"I hope the next man will have better luck," he chuckled.

"If he has the Criterion will suffer."

"Don't you believe it. The people know where to get the best for their nickels."

"I agree with you. They found the Savoy that place, and if Jackson hadn't got cold feet for some reason, the people in this neighborhood would have had him putting out a 'S. R. O.' sign every night."

"We don't put those signs out. We let the people find that out when they get inside."

"Yes, I guess you do. You've been running something over a year, and Stacey nearly as long. I should think you had made money enough to retire on."

"I haven't made a million yet."

"Expect to make that much out of your show?"

"Not out of one house. I'm negotiating for another downtown."

"I have come to tender my resignation, Mr. Hickey," said Duncan an hour later when he walked into the office of the United Film Corporation.

"What's the matter? Tired of the business?" said the manager.

"No, but I have more important business matters to look after."

"What's that?"

"I've bought out the Savoy motion picture house."

"You've done what?"

Duncan repeated his statement.

"I hope you'll have better luck than the other owners."

"I trust I may have. It won't be my fault if it doesn't go."

"Got it cheap, I suppose?"

"It's easily worth what I paid for it."

"Was Jackson glad to sell?"

"Yes."

"Have you found out the rock on which he split?"

"No. He wouldn't tell me, even after he had the money in his pocket."

"What did his books show?"

"Good and increasing business. He showed to the full capacity of the house, including standing-room, the last three nights, and the house was fairly crowded at the afternoon shows."

"I don't believe it. He must have doctored his books."

"I have the evidence of at least two disinterested eye-witnesses."

"Are you sure they were disinterested?"

"I believe they were. I have no reason to suspect that they were in collusion with Jackson."

"But, my dear fellow, it isn't reasonable for the proprietor of a successful show to shut down in the midst of his prosperity and look around for a successor."

"Not as a rule, but Jackson, after the sale was completed, admitted that he was forced to contend with an unusual obstacle. He wouldn't tell me what the obstacle was. He said I'd find it out in due time myself."

"That's cheerful. You may have been buncoed."

"I'll risk that. The theatre is all right, the best of the three in the neighborhood. The prospect of getting full houses is as good as any one could ask for. The license is all right. The obstacle Jackson referred to is simply a jinx."

"A jinx!"

"Anything mysterious and unaccountable may be regarded as a jinx. Jackson's quick exit from a flow of prosperity shows that he has been intimidated by something, and he's afraid even to reveal what it is. The record of his four predecessors so closely resembles his that it is quite clear to me that the same influence, whatever it is, has been exerted on them with equal success. I haven't the least doubt but it will be worked on me just as soon as I show to extra good business."

"And you expect to survive the ordeal. I suppose?" grinned Hickey.

"I may or I may not. No one is invincible over forces that exceed his powers of resistance. All I will say now is that there will be something doing when that jinx tackles me. If I win out you can take it from me that the Savoy will run that neighborhood."

"What kind of jinx do you think it is?"

"I haven't the remotest idea."

"Maybe it's an effort on the part of the trust to run the independent films out of that district."

"That occurred to me, but in that case they

would have bought the theatre out as soon as it was offered for sale and run it conjointly."

"Well, I give it up."

"You might as well, for I'm satisfied you couldn't guess the riddle. I have come as near to it, I imagine, as one can who is in the dark. It is clearly a case of personal intimidation, so artfully worked that none of the five managers have been able to find a way to protect themselves."

"Admitting that it is, there must be a motive behind it. What is it? Let us go back to Benson, the first owner. We will say he was intimidated into selling a good thing owing to causes over which he had no control. Very good. If there had been an object in forcing him out it would have shown itself then and there, wouldn't it? As soon as he was intimidated the object of the intimidators would have been accomplished. That should have ended the whole business. Instead of which he was allowed to sell out to a man who, according to your surmise, was in turn intimidated in the same way, and so it's gone on five times, and you have been allowed to take undisputed possession of the house. Common sense is common sense, my dear fellow. There is no sense whatever in the successive intimidation of five men, when there seems to be no motive whatever in the business. You may think your reasoning all right, but in my opinion it is simply a case of failure to draw business, and the books juggled afterward to catch a buyer," said Hickey.

"All right. We'll let it go at that," said Duncan, getting up and bringing the argument to an end.

CHAPTER VI.—Duncan Meets Some Professional People.

That evening Duncan called at Carter's boarding-house to see his actor friend.

"He's not in," said the servant, much to Duncan's disappointment.

"Do you know where he went?" he asked.

"No, I do not."

So Duncan had to go away. He was sorry Carter was not at home, for he wanted to tell him about his acquisition of the Savoy motion picture house. He knew that the news would greatly surprise the moving picture actor, and would undoubtedly interest him. Then it occurred to him to call on Miss Leslie and tell her. He believed she would be pleased to learn that fortune had befriended him. He had the address of her boarding-house, and, moreover, had been invited to visit her, so he proceeded to do so. He reached the house, asked for the young actress, and was again disappointed. She had gone visiting herself that evening.

"Kindly tell her that Duncan Scott called, will you?" he said.

"Certainly. I'll tell her as soon as she comes back," said the maid.

Duncan strolled to Forty-second street, and along that brilliantly lighted thoroughfare where half a dozen or more theaters were in full blast, hoping to meet Carter, whose stamping ground was in that neighborhood. A moving picture actor named Tom Shirley, with whom Duncan

was slightly acquainted, came out of a cafe, saw him and stopped him.

"Glad to see you, Scott. Where bound?"

"Nowhere in particular. I was looking for Richard Carter," said Duncan.

"He went over to call on Miss Maud Fuller, the leading lady of the Atlas Studio. He's kind of sweet on her."

"She rooms with Miss Norma Leslie, on Thirty-ninth street," said Duncan.

"She did until to-day. She and Miss Leslie had a scrap about something—a man, guess, and Miss Fuller pulled up stakes and lit out. She's gone to live with Miss Mamie Mulligan, professionally known as Mignon French, who is in vaudeville, when the stars are propitious. Miss Mulligan and Mable Joyce are keeping house in a Thirty-eighth street flat. If you're anxious to see Carter, we'll go over there."

"But I'm not acquainted with either Miss Mulligan or Miss Joyce," said Duncan.

"Well, I am, and I'll introduce you. We'll be as welcome as the roses in June."

"I don't want to intrude on Carter and Miss Fuller."

"I should worry about them. Come, let's get a wiggle on. Mamie Mulligan will be delighted to know you. She keeps open house to all her friends, and they are legion. Not to know Miss Mulligan is like being in a bush league."

Tom Shirley caught Duncan by the arm, and the young proprietor of the Savoy simply had to go with him whether he wanted to or not. They walked down Broadway to Thirty-eighth street, Shirley nodding to several professional friends of the male persuasion they passed, turned eastward, crossed Sixth avenue, and finally came to the Nottingham, a cheap-looking apartment house, whose highly ornamental vestibule brought into strong relief its general tone of shabbiness. Shirley had evidently been there before, for without the least hesitation his finger punctuated an electric button below which were stencilled the following two names: French, Joyce. Underneath the latter a narrow slip of card had been inserted which bore the name of Maud Fuller. A clicking sound indicated that the door was open for them to walk in. Shirley took the lead, and Duncan followed him to the third landing, where a vision in bleached hair and a pink wrapper stood awaiting their company.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Tom Shirley," said the vision, effusively. "Who's your friend? I don't recognize him."

"Miss Mulligan, Mr. Scott, of the United Film Corporation," said Shirley.

"Delighted to make your acquaintance, Mr. Scott. Come right in and make yourself at home," said Miss Mulligan. "There's no one here except Mabel," meaning Miss Joyce, "Maud Fuller, who's come to stay with us, as she's tired of boarding, and Dick Carter. I'll do the honors for your friend."

Before she could say another word Maud Fuller, who was occupying a lounge with Carter, bounced up with a little cry of surprise and rushed at Duncan.

"Why, Mr. Scott, this is a delightful surprise. I'm awful glad to see you. I didn't know you were acquainted with Mamie. I suppose you heard I was here. Move over, Dick," and she

squeezed Carter over to make room for Duncan. Carter nodded to the boy, but he didn't look pleased at his enthusiastic reception by Miss Fuller.

"One moment, please, Maud," interposed Miss Mulligan. "I must introduce Mr. Scott to Mabel," and she proceeded to do so.

Miss Joyce was a statuesque blonde, and she expressed the pleasure she felt at making Duncan's acquaintance. Tom Shirley, after nodding all around and depositing his hat on top of a pile of theatrical magazines, had subsided into a seat beside Miss Joyce, while Miss Mulligan took possession of a cane rocker, purchased at a bargain sale in a department store.

"Isn't it warm?" she remarked, fanning herself with a coverless copy of a motion picture magazine.

Then she recollected she had left the gas burning at full swing in the little kitchen and flew in there to correct the error. Miss Fuller, like a rose between two leaves, was endeavoring to hold the attention of both Duncan and Carter, and monopolized all the talk. When her breath gave out, Duncan ventured to explain how he happened to come to the flat.

"I was looking for you, Carter," he said. "I called at your boarding-house and was told you were not there. Then I went up to Forty-second street, thinking to find you in that neighborhood. There I met Mr. Shirley, who told me I would find you here, and he insisted on bringing me around, so here I am."

"What did you want to see me about?" asked Carter.

"I wanted to tell you the news."

"What news?" asked the actor, showing no particular curiosity.

"I've bought the Savoy motion picture house."

"You have?" cried Carter, incredulously.

"Yes. I am now the owner of the establishment and the jinx attached to it."

"You're joking, aren't you?"

"No. I got the money—borrowed it—from the gentleman whose little daughter I saved yesterday afternoon."

"Upon my word, this is a surprise. When are you going to open up?"

"Saturday afternoon."

Miss Fuller listened with surprised interest. Then she wanted to know all about the Savoy, and how Duncan came to buy it, and much more to the same effect, all of which the boy endeavored to answer to her satisfaction.

"Say, girls," she exclaimed to her two friends. "What do you think? Mr. Scott has bought a motion picture house uptown—the Savoy, and is going to open on Saturday afternoon."

Duncan's importance rose several notches. As proprietor of a moving picture theatre, his financial stability seemed assured, and that was a comfortable reflection for those acquaintances who might find it necessary to touch him for a loan. He was congratulated by all hands, and then Miss Mulligan pressed Tom Shirley into the service of helping her transport several bottles of lager from the ice-chest to the dining-room where the party were seated.

"Thank you, I don't drink," said Duncan, when he was presented with the first glass.

"Sh? What's that? You don't drink?" ejacu-

lated Shirley, apparently paralyzed by the announcement. "Oh, yes, I see, ha, ha ha! You don't drink beer, you mean?"

"I don't drink anything—except water," said the boy, decidedly.

Miss Mulligan had a fit, but recovered herself with an effort. Fifteen minutes later Duncan recollected that he had an engagement and hoped the company would excuse his tearing himself away. Miss Fuller appeared disappointed because he couldn't stay longer. While Mamie Mulligan was hunting for his hat, which she had relieved him of when he entered the room, the door-bell rang, indicating more visitors. The new arrivals proved to be the two young men, known in vaudeville as the "Spinning Whirligigs," but to their friends as Murphy and Fogg. Duncan was introduced to them and then beat a hasty retreat. Next day he was at his moving picture show early. One of the first things he did was to leave an order with a neighboring sign painter for a large canvas sign to fill up the greater part of the entrance. He furnished the following copy to be inscribed in big letters:

THE SAVOY

Reopens on

Saturday Afternoon, the 11th,

With an Attractive Bill.

At a quarter to twelve the pianist appeared. He was an experienced performer in his line.

"Are you Mr. Scott?" he said to Duncan.

"Yes."

My name is McDonald. I got a postal card from you asking me to call around and see you. What's the matter with Mr. Jackson?"

"I bought him out."

"That so? I suppose you want to engage me for the show?"

"You have the first chance at the job. I suppose you've been here since Jackson opened up?"

"No. I've only worked two days—last Saturday and Sunday. When I dropped around on Monday morning for my pay, Mr. Jackson told me the house would be closed till next Saturday on account of some alterations that had to be made, and I was to report then."

"Indeed," said Duncan, much surprised, for he knew that no alterations had been made, and he saw no need of any. "Then you don't know much about the house?"

"Not much."

"I understand Jackson had big houses on Saturday and Sunday?"

"Packed to the doors in the evening, and every seat occupied in the afternoon," said MacDonald.

This appeared to be confirmatory evidence that Jackson had been doing good business, and backed up the book entries for the two days in question. After some further conversation with the young man, Duncan engaged him and told him to report for duty on Saturday afternoon. None of the other late attaches of the house turned up, and Duncan went to lunch, leaving a slip on the door stating that he would be back in half an hour.

CHAPTER VII.—Getting Ready for Business.

That afternoon he met Norma Leslie on the street. The encounter was a pleasure to both.

"You called to see me last evening, Mr. Scott,"

said Norma. "I am so sorry I was out. I hope you will repeat the visit soon. Can't you call on Sunday evening?"

"Yes, I guess I can."

"Then I will expect you. The story of your rescue of the little girl was in the paper yesterday morning."

"I know it. By the way, I want to tell you a bit of news. It will probably surprise you."

"I am listening."

"You remember I told you that the Savoy motion picture house went out of business for the fifth time in six months?"

"Yes."

"It will reopen Saturday afternoon under my management."

"That is news," she said, with a smile. "Have you been hired to run it?"

"No. I have bought the place out."

"Is it possible! I hope you will be able to make it go."

"I shall try mighty hard to do so. The only trouble I apprehend is from the jinx."

"I remember you said there was some mystery attached to it, or seemed to be."

"And I promised to let you know all about it when I found out. Well, I called on Jackson next day, but he was as mute on the subject as a mopstick. All I could get out of him was he was looking for a purchaser, and he offered it to me for \$2,500. If he had offered it for half of that I couldn't have taken it, but yesterday morning the money unexpectedly came my way, and I thought it a good chance to get into the game at a fair outlay—the place is really worth more than the price I paid—so I closed with Jackson, and the show is now mine. After the deal had been put through Jackson admitted there was something wrong with the establishment, but he wouldn't say what it was, other than it was hoodooed."

"Hoodooed!" ejaculated Miss Leslie, looking serious.

"That's what he said, but it's my opinion there is an underlying conspiracy on the part of interested persons to put the theatre entirely out of business. I have my suspicions on the subject, but if such be the case it is strange that not one of the five previous owners was able to buck against it. That's where the mystery comes in, I guess."

"I shall root hard for you to succeed."

"Thank you, Miss Leslie. I knew I could count on your moral support."

"You certainly can," she said, earnestly.

"By the way, you have lost your room-mate, Miss Fuller."

"Yes," said the girl, with a frown. "We had our first tiff, and she decided to make a quick change to apartment life with two professional friends of hers."

"Yes, I know. She's gone to live with Miss Mulligan and Miss Joyce."

"How did you learn that?" said Norma, evidently not pleased that Duncan was so well informed.

"I was around to the flat last evening."

"You were!" flashed the girl, looking a bit angry.

"Yes, quite by accident. I was looking for Carter to tell him about my acquisition of the

Savoy, when I ran across Tom Shirley, of the Castle Studio, and he told me I'd be likely to find my friend at the Mulligan-Joyce apartments. As I wasn't acquainted with either of the ladies, I had no intention of going there, but Shirley said he'd take me there, as he was acquainted, and so we went."

"And you met Miss Fuller there, of course," said Norma, with a jealous ring to her tones.

"Yes, she was there, seated on the lounge with Carter."

"I suppose you received a cordial invitation to call soon again, especially from Maud?"

"Why from Miss Fuller?" asked Duncan, in some surprise. "She has no particular interest in me, nor have I in her. There is only one girl I care anything for, and she's about your size."

It was impossible for Miss Leslie to mistake Duncan's meaning, and she blushed rosily under his ardent look. Her jealous fancies took flight for the time being, and her heart beat faster than usual.

"Who is the lady?" she said, after a momentary pause.

"I thought you knew her," said Duncan.

"How could I? You have so many lady acquaintances that——"

"You are wrong. I have very few, and none of them interest me but——"

Miss Leslie saw what was coming, and though the word and its meaning were quite in accord with her feelings, still she was coquettish enough to block further talk on the subject.

"Dear me, I didn't know it was so late," she interrupted. "I will have to run along. I'll expect to see you on Sunday——"

"I'm afraid I can't call on Sunday, after all," he said, regretfully.

"Why not?" she asked, blankly. "You said you would come."

"I know I did, and I meant to do so, but I forgot about my moving picture show. It will be open Sunday night. I will have to be on hand to look after it. Can't you come up some afternoon with Carter, or a lady friend?"

"My time is pretty well taken up every day at the studio, except on Sunday."

"Make it Sunday, then. I want you to see the theatre. It is an uncommonly fine little house. Besides, your presence there might cross the hoo-doo."

"If I thought it would I certainly would make it a point to go there."

"Thank you. You said that as if you meant it."

"I do mean it. There is nothing I wouldn't do for——"

Miss Leslie suddenly recollected what she was about to say, and stopped quite abruptly in some confusion.

"For who, Miss Leslie?" said Duncan, grabbing her gloved hand.

"Now, really, Mr. Scott, you mustn't ask ridiculous questions," said the girl, with blazing cheeks. "I was thinking about something that happened this morning. It was really too funny for anything. If I had time I'd tell you."

"I beg your pardon," said Duncan, releasing her hand. "I thought we were speaking about the hoo-doo, and that you—well, never mind. You will come and see me at the Savoy, won't you?"

There was a pleading earnestness in his tone

that went straight to her heart. Could she refuse anything within reason that he asked of her? And was she not intensely interested in his venture, as well as curious to inspect the little theatre in spite of its uncanny atmosphere?

"Yes, I will come at the very first chance I have," she replied, with a look that encouraged his hopes. "I should be very happy indeed if my presence put the jinx to flight for good."

"She said there was nothing she would do for—who? I wonder if she really meant me? She would make no admission, though she looked guilty when I tried to force her into a corner. You can't get anything on a woman to save your life. I'd give a whole lot to know just how I stand with her. I sometimes think I have a chance, and then again she doesn't—— Oh, fudge! there are other men who interest her more than I do. And yet she does treat me awfully nice. I almost wish I had never met her, for I shall be on the rack till I learn the truth."

Next morning when he reached the theatre the big sign was in its temporary place, an object of considerable attention in the neighborhood. The little house had had such a checkered career during its short existence that it had become an object of some wonder. There was no indication in the sign that the place had changed hands this time, but it was taken that way on account of the For Sale sign which had been up Monday afternoon and a part of Tuesday. The owners of the Criterion and Crescent saw the sign, and they wondered who the sixth victim was. That he would go the way of the others they did not doubt. At any rate, they so expressed themselves to each other when they met, as they did every day, for there was no professional jealousy between them—they were united against the common enemy.

They had viewed the establishment of the Savoy as an encroachment on their business, and its final entingishment was their daily prayer. They might have bought it out through a third party had they been so minded, and then run it conjointly, but there were reasons why they balked at this, and so the Savoy was left to run itself out of its own accord, as it seemed likely to do. Duncan was placing his posters of Saturday's bill on exhibition when Spencer came along.

"Hello, what are you up to, Scott? Trying to help a wobbly joint on its feet? The United Films have made a corpse of this place already. Had Benson used the right kind of stuff Stacey and I might have had a slight scare thrown into us, but as his successors have stuck by you, the results have been extremely satisfactory to us. I guess the Savoy is now making its last kick."

"I think so myself, but it will be strong enough to make some people sit up and take notice," replied the boy.

"Meaning Stacey and me, I suppose?" grinned Spencer.

"If the cap fits, wear it."

Spencer laughed and looked the announcements over.

"You ought to have bought this place out yourself, you seem to take such a lot of interest in it," he said.

"That's what I have done. You don't suppose I'd fool away my time up here for somebody else, do you?"

"Is that a fact, Scott?" said Spencer, in some surprise.

"That's a fact. Now run up to the Crescent and tell the news to Stacey."

"It will keep till to-morrow. I hope you have kissed your money good-by. I doubt if you'll be able to find a purchaser when you realize that you've been buncoed. The people up here look on the Savoy as a good joke."

"I don't care how they look at it as long as they come up with their nickels."

"You won't take in enough nickels to pay your light bill. Say, what are those small squares doing on your bills?"

"Those are pieces of pitch plaster I bought at the drug store across the street."

"What have you got them on the bills for?"

"For their drawing property—to help me draw a full house."

Spencer grinned.

"If you got in a poker game you might stand a show of drawing a full house," he said.

"If I passed around free drinks during the show I might also have a full house. That's the only way you and Stacey will ever get a full house after the Savoy hits its stride."

"The Savoy will never hit anything but the junk heap. I expect to see the sheriff's flag inside of two weeks unless you have more money to lose than I think you have. A fool there was with money to burn. He put it into a movie concern. In a week he went broke; had his clothes in the soak; and that is the lesson that you have to learn, Scottie, old boy. Ta, ta," and Spencer walked off highly pleased with himself and what he saw ahead of the Savoy.

Duncan opened up on Saturday. The show was crowded, but he found that there were a number of tickets taken in which proved to be tickets which Jackson had issued previous to the opening of the show. On his way home that night he saw two well-known men, one a politician, leaving a cafe. Another man stepped out of a hallway and aimed a revolver at the politician. Duncan flung his hat at the man which disconcerted his aim as the revolver went off. Duncan then grappled with the man and knocked the revolver out of his hand. Great excitement prevailed. A policeman now came up, and Duncan explained the case. The politician had been only slightly wounded. His name was John Mason. The prisoner was marched away by the officer. The wounded man was taken away by his friend after he had thanked Duncan. The papers next morning published the affair. Duncan and Mason and his friend appeared at court next morning and the prisoner was remanded for trial. Mason then took Duncan's address and stated he would hear from him later and took his departure.

CHAPTER VIII.—Trying to Boost His Show.

As Sunday was regarded as the best day at motion picture houses of the class which embraced the Savoy, Duncan felt that he would be fully justified in refusing all tickets presented at the door which had not been sold directly at the box office. It was his opinion that few managers would have stood for them the day before as he

had done. His count after the last show showed he had been done to the tune of \$25, and he felt it was time to call a halt. It was not the custom for tickets to be sold in advance, either singly or in blocks, even at the full price. A manager could do it if he wanted to, but Duncan did not know of any of them doing it. Tickets were always sold from an endless roll right at the window, and that prevented all chance of bogus tickets being worked off on the management. There was no way of his knowing how many tickets had been disposed of on the outside by Jackson, either as a sharp practice dodge when he knew he was going out of business, or at cut rates to bolster up poor attendance. In any case, Duncan saw no reason why he should accept them.

He was not responsible for anything in that line Jackson had done. In selling out, the proprietor had said nothing to him about a bunch of admission being out, and consequently their agreement did not cover them. The difficulty of the case was that the people who held these tickets, and had doubtless paid for them in some way, would put up a stiff kick when they were turned down at the door. As they couldn't get back at Jackson, they would jump on the new manager. They would probably show their displeasure by staying away from the show altogether, and patronizing the Criterion and Crescent instead. Since the easiest way is always the best, Duncan decided to accept the tickets at all afternoon shows, and decline to take them on evenings, or on Saturday or Sunday at all.

After leaving the court he hurried up to his theatre, got two pieces of cardboard and printed on them in duplicate the sign that covered the ground in his opinion. By that time his attendants had arrived, and he instructed one of them to hang the signs in conspicuous places in front. This young man, who presided at the ticket-box, was directed to look at all tickets presented, and refuse those bearing any number which had been issued prior to the reopening of the house. Duncan then went to dinner at the nearby restaurant. Fully 300 hundred tickets were turned down during the afternoon. Many kicks were put up, but when their attention was called to the sign, they subsided, went to the window and paid their money. Duncan took in \$80 that day, and felt encouraged by the outlook.

Next day the attendance was poor at the afternoon shows, and half of it was represented by the free tickets that meant no money to Duncan. The evening shows were not a whole lot better attended, and the total receipts amounted to less than \$20. Things were just as unsatisfactory on Tuesday. Investigation showed that the Criterion and Crescent had good audiences on both days—good for the fore part of the week. A closer inspection of the record showed many erasures and corrections, then Duncan began to suspect that Manager Hickey, of the United Film Corporation, did not make a bad guess when he intimated that the books might have been doctored to cover up the real facts.

Whether he had been buncoed or not, he was in up to his neck, and had to swim out to avoid going in over his head. Fortunately, he knew he could fall back on Mr. Westbrook if the matter came to a crisis with him, but to a lad of his

progressive and ambitious ideas such a reflection carried little comfort. He had embarked in the enterprise to make his mark through his own exertions alone, and the idea of having to rely on the aid of a friend after getting a start was decidedly repugnant to him. He expected to repay the money he had accepted as a loan and thus wipe out to a great extent the original obligation. He was standing outside the theatre on Wednesday noon wondering what kind of attendance he would have that afternoon, when he was approached by a man who looked like a prosperous retail merchant.

"Is Mr. Jackson around?" inquired the man in a brisk tone.

"No. That gentleman is no longer connected with this establishment. If you want to see him you may learn something concerning his movements at his flat on Prospect avenue. I understand, however, that he has gone to Chicago. I have the number of the flat, and if you want it I will get it for you."

"Never mind. If he is out of the Savoy I have no business to transact with him. Do you represent the place now?"

"Yes, sir. I am running the house."

"Very good. I have been getting admission tickets to the Savoy from Mr. Jackson in blocks of 250 at two cents each, good for any show, except Sunday. Can I continue the arrangement with you?"

"I should say not, sir," replied Duncan, beginning to see a light in the back ticket business. "My I ask what use you put those tickets to? A lot of them are coming in to me, for which I have received no cash equivalent, and I would be justified in refusing them, but rather than create a troublesome discussion, I am accepting them under the conditions set forth in that notice," and the young manager pointed to it.

The man read it.

"Those conditions are reasonable," he said. "As business has been very poor at this house, Jackson resorted to the scheme of disposing of tickets in blocks to a number of us store-keepers. We give them away to people purchasing twenty-five cents' worth of merchandise and upward. Indeed, one man has been giving out a ticket for every twenty-five cents' worth of goods bought for cash in his store."

"That's a great scheme for you store-keepers if it brings you in trade, but I can't see where it benefits the motion picture house," said Duncan.

"Why, if you are showing to empty seats, it fills them."

"It does—at two cents each, and there is no money in it. When attendance gets so bad that one has to sell seats at two cents, it's time for him to quit, unless he is running a show for philanthropic reasons only."

"Then you don't care to continue the Jackson arrangement?" asked the man.

"No, sir, I do not. I am running this house on legitimate lines. If I can't make it pay that way, I won't paper sixty per cent. of my house, for that is what the Jackson scheme amounts to. I don't think you'd care to conduct your own business on such a plan. It cheapens a business in the eyes of the public. I am giving a good show—better, I believe, than my two rivals—and

it costs money to do that. When the people in this neighborhood wake up to what the Savoy is offering them for a nickel, they will not let it get by them."

That closed the interview, and the store-keeper went off.

"Now I understand how those tickets got around. I don't know how many store-keepers are dispensing them, but one of them has reached the end of his supply, and the others are bound to soon. That will finish the game, and from the size of the crowd I've had Monday and yesterday I guess I'm not losing much through them. I've got to get up some scheme to boom the theatre. At present I'm only getting the overflow from the Criterion and Crescent. I must reverse that," said Duncan.

The Savoy did a little better that day, as it ought to have done. It was the middle of the week and the time for it to pick up. The attendance as a whole, however, was far from satisfactory. Thursday showed improved results, but attendance dropped away badly on Friday. The two-cent tickets were still coming in and Duncan's balance was on the wrong side. A second store-keeper called to get 250 tickets, at two cents, but he didn't get them.

Duncan put on a corking good bill on Saturday, and had circulars distributed all around the district. The result was four big houses, and everybody satisfied that they had got their money's worth and something over. More circulars were distributed in the Sunday papers, Duncan arranging with the newsdealers having the largest trade. This method of publicity was not cheap, but it proved effective, and the Savoy was jammed at the four shows, the young manager taking in a little over \$100. Duncan learned that for once he had put it over his rivals. The opposition encountered the worst Sunday business for many weeks. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, with few free admissions to accept, the attendance was much better than for the corresponding days of the first week.

"I hope the tide has turned," thought Duncan, after sending out a bunch of boys with circulars to distribute broadcast.

He was up to the theatre early, as usual, on Thursday, and was out in the narrow back yard, building a framework on which a painted sign was to be stretched, having received permission, for a small consideration, to place it in a vacant lot for a short time while excavation for a new building was going on, when one of the boys who helped distribute his circulars came through and told him that a lady and gentleman wanted to see him outside.

"All right," said Duncan, not dreaming who his visitors were, "tell them I will be right out."

The boy went back and gave his message to the callers, who were Richard Carter and Norma Leslie. Duncan drove the last nail and entered the theatre through the back door. Shutting the door he stepped toward the side aisle. It was a gloomy morning and the room was unusually dark. He collided with the end seat on the front row and dropped a lead pencil he was carrying in his fingers. One of his shins was barked by the iron framework of the seat.

"Hang it, why didn't I turn this bulb here

on? It's as dark as a dungeon in here this morning," he said.

He reached for the bulb, throwing his weight on one leg. His foot happened to rest on the round pencil. As though fastened to a roller skate, his foot glided forward and the young manager hit the floor with a whack that shook the room. The next instant a trap-door communicating with the cellar, which Duncan had never noticed there, dropped, like the trap of a gallows, and Duncan shot through into the depths with a suddenness and took away his breath.

CHAPTER IX.—A Gruesome Discovery.

In the meantime the two visitors were standing in the vestibule of the theatre waiting for the young manager to appear. The minutes slipped by and he came not.

"I wonder what is keeping Duncan so long?" said Carter to Miss Leslie.

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the double entrance doors were suddenly banged open and Duncan dashed out, hatless, and in a state of great excitement. Carter and the pretty actress were not a little startled by the young manager's precipitate exit from the theatre. Their first impression was that the house was on fire.

"What's the matter, old man?" cried Carter, grabbing the boy by the arm.

"Carter! Miss Leslie!" ejaculated Duncan, stopping and staring at them.

"Sure. The two of us have come up to see you and your motion picture house. But what's wrong, my dear fellow? What has happened? It must be something out of the ordinary to start a chap of your caliber on the run. You haven't unexpectedly run up against that jinx you believed was in possession here, have you?"

"Jinx! Oh, my, it's worse than that," cried Duncan.

"Worse than the jinx? Explain yourself."

"There are three corpses in the cellar."

Miss Leslie uttered a suppressed scream.

"Three corpses!" cried Carter. "How came they to be there? Has a murder been committed on your premises?"

"I don't know how they got there, but they're ghastly looking objects. The sight of them under matchlight gave me an awful turn; and to think I landed on top of them."

"Landed on top of them! What do you mean?"

"A section of the floor gave way and I fell through."

"The floor of the theater?"

"Yes."

"How much of the floor has fallen in? It's a good thing this didn't happen with an audience in the house, or there'd have been a panic."

"Only a small part of the floor—a trap door, I guess, that I never noticed was there. I must have shook the fastenings out of place when I slipped and fell while reaching up to turn on one of the electric lights. At any rate, I went through into the cellar so quick that I didn't know what had happened to me. I alighted on something elevated above the floor that broke my fall, or I might have knocked my brains out.

There was a crash and the whole business went down with me. Some object fell across me, and it smelt anything but sweet. I pushed it off, scrambled on my feet and struck a match. Then I saw the three corpses lying in a confused heap, and it was evident that one of them was the object which had fallen over me. They must have been laid out on a light table, as the wreck of that article testified. I thought I had a pretty good nerve, but that sight seemed to take the starch all out of me. I guess the shaking up I had been treated to unnerved me. You can't imagine what an awful sensation it is to feel yourself falling through space. It was all over in a couple of seconds, but those seconds were the longest I ever put in. Well, I didn't take a second look at those bodies, for seeing an iron ladder running straight upward, I made for it, rushed up as if Old Nick was at my heels, and tumbled out into the theatre. Then I put for the sidewalk."

"Upon my word, Duncan, this yarn is something of a thriller," said Carter. "One corpse is bad enough to find on one's premises, but three—how in the name of wonder could they have got in your cellar? The cellar goes with the theatre, doesn't it?"

"Yes, but I have no use for it. I never was in it till I fell in just now."

"There must be an entrance to it from the sidewalk."

"There is—a pair of flat iron doors, covering, I suppose, a flight of steps; but they are secured on the other side, and as solid as a rock—braced, I judge. There is another entrance of the same kind in the yard, but the doors are set in a slanting position and secured by a padlock, the key of which is hanging in the box office. The trap-door was probably put there by the grocer, who originally occupied the place before it was turned into a movie, but I never heard of a trap door opening downward, except on a gallows. They always open upward, otherwise they would be too dangerous to have around. This one is an exception to the rule, and take it from me I'm going to nail it up solid with boards as soon as those bodies have been taken away."

"But if you have the key to the only practicable entrance to the cellar, how could those bodies have got there without your knowledge? Are you sure the key is hanging in your box-office?"

"Yes, I saw it a while ago when I was in there."

"And you are positive the back entrance is locked?"

"The staple is held by a padlock."

"Have you tried the padlock to see if it is locked?"

"No. I took it for granted that it was from the looks of it."

"We'll go out there and investigate, and then you had better telephone the police."

"Will you step into the box office, Miss Leslie?" said Duncan.

The actress glanced into the dark theater and hesitated. The knowledge that there were three corpses in the cellar was disquieting to her nerves, even though they were at the back part of the building.

"I think I will remain out here," she said with a weak smile.

"Better come in," said the young manager.

"There is a chair in the office. I will light up and make things more cheerful."

She was persuaded to enter, and Duncan turned on a section of the lights. Leaving her in the office, Duncan and Carter went to the rear. The gaping trap-door lay between them and the back exit.

"That's where you went down, is it?" said Carter.

"Yes."

"You had a nasty drop," said the actor, peering down into the black void. "Are the corpses down there?"

"They are. If there was a light you could see them."

"Got a match? Flash it down."

Duncan did so, and the outlines of three tumbled bodies could just be made out below.

"I see them," said Carter. "Well, let's get into the yard."

"Step around the trap and open that door facing you," said Duncan.

The actor did so and walked out into the yard. An investigation of the cellar door showed that the padlock was fast.

"They never got in that way," said Carter, "unless the key was used. Have you got a lantern?"

"No."

"Well, go to the nearest grocery and buy a couple of candles and we'll take a good look at those dead bodies before we ring up the police. It is rather an awkward situation to have to explain to the authorities—the presence of three dead men in your cellar. They will naturally want to know how they got there. Now, you are the only one who has access to the place, and a trap-door opening downward looks awfully suggestive. They might suspect that you are a modern Sweeny Todd. Heard of him, haven't you?"

"I can't say that I have."

"He was the barber of Fleet street, London. His barber chair was secured to a revolving trap-door in the floor. When a prosperous looking customer came into his shop to be shaved or have his hair cut, and the shop was empty at the time the man seated himself in the chair, Sweeny Todd, after a cautious look through the window, would press a spring concealed under the handle of the chair, whereupon the chair revolved, the piece of flooring coming up as it went down, the customer was dumped into the stone cellar, where his neck was generally broken, and the chair returned to its place empty after making a complete revolution. Then after work was over for the day, Todd descended to the cellar, cleaned out the dead man, and got rid of his body by way of the sewer. Great scheme, wasn't it?"

"Yes; but of course he was caught in the end."

"Sure he was, or the facts wouldn't have come out."

"You think the police might suspect that I dropped these corpses through that trap in order to rob them during the night. That would be a mighty difficult as well as dangerous piece of business to try to put through."

"I don't see how it could be done unless the men were decoyed in here after the show was closed, or before it was opened in the morning. The fact, however, remains that those three

corpses are now lying under the trap-door. They couldn't have got there of their own accord. Since you, the proprietor of the place, are not able to throw any light on the subject, it looks as though somebody must have a key fitting your front door, and that this unknown is the cause of those bodies being there."

"This is going to be awkward business for me. The police will take charge of the premises until the coroner has made an investigation, and there'll be no show here to-day. Then the matter will be a sensation for the newspapers, and gracious knows how the public will feel about coming here. It may have a worse effect than the jinx I've been counting on."

"One thing I'd do before I called in the police, and that would be to nail up that trap solid," said Carter. "The next thing would be to put the bodies somewhere else in the cellar. I'll help you do it. As far as the effect this thing will have on the fortunes of your show I can't say, but the notoriety might have the contrary effect you imagine. The public is inclined toward morbid curiosity. The fact that three corpses were in your cellar under most mysterious circumstances may draw tremendous crowds here to your great profit."

"I hardly think so. It might draw men, but hardly women and children, who are my chief afternoon patrons."

"You can't tell. It's my opinion that the sensation will prove the greatest advertising card you have. However, we are wasting time. Go and get the candles, and fetch the cellar key with you when you come back."

Duncan stopped at the box office on the way out and told Miss Leslie that he and Carter were going to take a good look at the corpses before the police were called in to see whether it was a case of murder, suicide or accidental death.

"Isn't it awful to make such a gruesome discovery in the cellar of your theatre just as you are getting started?" said the girl.

"Yes, it's rather awkward for me. I hope it won't have a bad effect on the show. Carter seems to think the sensation will be a big card for me, but I am rather doubtful on that score. It is too bad that your visit here should be spoiled in this way," said Duncan.

"I suppose it can't be helped," she answered with a little smile.

Duncan went to the grocery store, bought two short, fat candles and hurried back to the theatre. Taking the key, he rejoined Carter in the yard. The cellar door was opened and both flaps thrown back, admitting the air and the gloomy light of the morning. They went down the stone steps, each with a candle in his hand. Pausing at the foot of the flight long enough to light the candles and get the wicks burning right, they walked to the spot where the three corpses were tangled up on the floor in the midst of the wreckage of the table. Holding their candles down, they surveyed the gruesome spectacle. Suddenly Carter bent down, seized one of the figures and yanked its white, waxen face into the full glare of the light.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he roared. "Well, if this isn't the best joke of the year. Why, these corpses of yours are only dummies—wax figures. Ha,

ha, ha! What a sell! But I dare say they looked real enough under the conditions you discovered them. They are precious life-like—I mean death-like. The chap who fashioned them was an artist at the business. I suppose they've been here for some time. Probably one of the former owners of the theatre brought them here for some purpose, and abandoned them when he sold out. May be this is the jinx that frightened the other owners into selling out quick. They found them laid out on the table, took them for murdered men, and were afraid to notify the police lest their inability to explain their presence in the cellar might get them into all kinds of trouble. It doesn't take a whole lot to rattle some men."

"There might be something in that," said the greatly relieved Duncan. "That would account for Jackson declining to tell me what the hoodoo was, and explain why he has gone to Chicago. I heard yesterday that his wife is selling out the contents of their flat, so I suppose she is about to follow him there."

"It is only a surmise on my part, of course. If it was Benson, the original owner of this theatre, who fetched the dummies here and left them when he sold out, it hardly seems reasonable that his four successors should all be scared into selling through the fact of finding them here if they were doing a good business."

"I don't believe they were doing good business," said Duncan. "It is now my opinion that the Savoy, for some reason, hasn't caught on at any stage of its existence. The only days I've done a paying business since I opened up have been Saturday and Sunday, and I had to help things along myself by showering the district with circulars. This is the nicest little house in the city of its class, but the people in this neighborhood have got to be pulled in to make them realize it. If these wax figures represent the supposed jinx, then I've got one obstacle off my hands, and all I have to do to make a success is to get the people to come here week days in numbers sufficient to make a profit."

"That's right," said Carter. "Now let's fix that trap and then rejoin Miss Lesslie and relieve her mind about the corpses."

When Duncan and Carter started to remove the wax figures and the wreck of the light table so as to make room for a packing case in order to stand on to nail up the trap, they found a combination of wires attached to both the figures and the top of the table, which was intact. The wires ran over small pulleys set in the ceiling and in the floor, and the ends continued on toward the front of the building.

"Hello, there was something intended here," said Carter.

"That seems pretty clear. I guess that table was fixed to rise up through the trap with the figures on it, though what the object of such a device was I can't imagine. It's a wreck now, so we are not likely to find out the meaning of it. We'll lift the figures back here for the present so as to get the packing case under the trap. I'll detach them from the wires later on."

That was done and the packing case placed in position. Duncan got the hammer and nails, and some pieces of board, and mounted the case, while Carter held up both candles. The young man-

ager found that the trap was intended to be held by a stout bolt, to the end of which was attached a wire which ran to a pulley, and thence toward the front of the building. Slamming up the trap-door, the bolt caught and held firm of itself. Duncan saw that in some way the shock of his fall upon the trap had caused the bolt to slip. To make matters sure, he nailed a piece of board under each end of the trap door, and that put it entirely out of business. Then he and Carter returned to Miss Leslie, who was nervously awaiting them.

Matters were explained to Miss Leslie, and then they all went to lunch. The joke about the wax figures had circulated around the Rialto, but he was so busy that no one had a chance to chaff him about it.

Spencer and Stacey both met him during the week, and asked him when he was going to close up.

"When it snows on the Fourth of July," answered Duncan.

Then they told him there was not room for three theatres.

"Well, then," said Duncan, "either one of you will have to close up, for I am going to stick."

CHAPTER X.—The Blind Singer.

Business continued rocky all the week, and when Duncan saw Carter again he looked kind of blue. The second month's rent would be due in another week, and so would the light bill. His running expenses had already eaten up his receipts, and he was behind, too. He had written to Mr. Westbrook a short letter saying that the show had got such a black eye from his predecessors that he was finding his work cut out for him, but he hoped to come out all right in the end.

"So business is rotten, is it?" said Carter.

"Frankly it is, except Saturday and Sunday," admitted Duncan.

"What are you putting on to-morrow?"

Duncan told him.

"Miss Leslie and I are in the 'Moonshiners.' That little girl will do anything for you, Duncan. Do you know she split with Maud Fuller on your account?"

"How so?" said Duncan, much astonished.

"She was jealous because Maud make up to you. I confess I didn't like it myself, for Maud is my particular divinity. I wasn't jealous, though, because you didn't encourage her, and I believe you think a lot of Miss Leslie."

"Well, what are you getting at?"

"This: Miss Leslie and I will not be busy to-morrow, nor the rest of the week. Get out announcement right away that Richard Carter and Norma Leslie, the principals of the three-reel story 'The Moonshiners' on the bill to-morrow, will appear before the audience at the close of the pictures in street attire, and see what the effect will be," said Carter.

"By George, that's a good idea. I'll do it. You two are in the pictures nearly every day; you've been applauded as though you were right here in person. I'll bet I'll pull a house."

"You can announce us for the rest of the week if we are in one of the stories. I'll call on Miss Leslie with you and put it up to her. I know

she'll agree to oblige you. She's always talking about you at the studio. She thinks you are the candy, take it from me. You made a ten-strike with her when you saved that little girl from the auto, and you caught Maud, too, but with her it was only a passing fancy. It's different with Miss Leslie. If you like her well enough to want to annex her for good by and by, there is nothing to stop you that I know of," said Carter.

"Between you, I and the post, Carter, I'd give a whole lot to win her," said Duncan earnestly, "but I'm afraid some luckier chap than me will get her."

"Not if you work the wires right. She isn't one to fall into your arms even if you've got a hold on her heart. You'll have to chase her. She doesn't believe in a girl holding herself cheap. As a rule a girl is only won once, and she thinks that the fellow who gets the right to pay her bills ought to have a run for his money."

By that time they had reached Miss Leslie's boarding-house, and they found her in. She was delighted to see Duncan, and was sorry he could only pay her a brief visit. Carter mentioned the object of their visit, and the young actress fell right in with the plan.

"I told him you'd consent to try, and give him a lift," said Carter. "He needs it, for he's on the rocks, and something has to be done to fill his house."

Duncan hurried uptown and got out the announcements. He left a hurry order for circulars with the printer, intending to have them distributed in the morning. He painted two signs to be hung outside, and then put them outside that afternoon. Next day was Tuesday, and heretofore he had poor houses. Not so that day. When the first show opened the Savoy was crowded with women and children, while the Criterion and the Crescent opened to empty benches.

Spencer and Stacey were in a funk. It was the worst house they had had in over a year, and they didn't know what it meant until word was carried to them that the Savoy was jammed.

"What in the name of Goshen is the attraction?" cried Spencer.

He was told. He gnashed his false teeth and swore at the fickleness of his patrons. His second show was no better. His evening houses were also light. Carter and Miss Leslie kept their work and made their bow before the crowd at each of the shows that day. Duncan took in \$100 instead of \$15 or \$30, and was so happy as a clam at high water. He dined his two good friends and told them he would never forget their kindness. New cards were displayed outside the Savoy, which told the public to "Get the habit and come to 'The Savoy.' Miss Norma Leslie and Mr. Richard Carter will positively appear at every show this week. The people seemed to be getting the habit, for they filled the seats at the pretty theatre on Thursday and Friday, and jammed the house on Saturday and Sunday.

On the following week, without the presence of the two professional favorites, Duncan had good houses, and now seemed likely to divide the patronage with his two rivals, which meant that he would get a little more than either. This was his fifth week, and his regime as manager had now outlasted that of any one of the previous five

owners. But he knew he must keep things humming to prevent a falling off. Spencer felt that he must get busy, and so he engaged the leading man of a rival studio to meet his audiences, and announced the fact broadcast.

His houses were big, and he had a scrap with Stacey over it.

"Competition is the life of trade," grinned Spencer, rubbing his hands. "Go and hire some actor yourself. I'm not stopping you."

Stacey did so, and hired a leading lady for several days on the following week. She could only present herself of evenings, however, but she pulled houses to Stacey's satisfaction, and the Criterion and the Savoy suffered a falling away. Then Miss Leslie came up evenings for Duncan, and everybody flocked back to his theatre. The situation was resolving itself into a three-cornered fight, for Spencer and Stacey didn't speak.

This was all the better for Duncan. It was about this time that Duncan made a bull's-eye shot, and quite accidentally. He received a note from a friend who had moved to the Bronx, telling he was sick and asking him to call. Leaving his show in charge of Carter one evening, he ran up there. After spending an hour with his friend he started back.

As he was passing a German beer saloon and garden, he heard the notes of a violin accompanying one of the sweetest voices he had ever listened to. He couldn't resist the temptation to enter and see who was singing. It was a girl of about fifteen, and her face was almost seraphic in its loveliness, but there was something about it that arrested Duncan's attention even more than her beauty—something strange and pathetic. Her companion was a boy of thirteen or thereabouts. He was playing the violin with much expression, and in a way that just filled in with the girl's voice. They were rather poorly clad, although their clothes were neat and clean. When the song was finished, the boy took off his cap and went around among the men present collecting coppers and nickels from those who were liberal enough to contribute. Duncan felt that when he had heard was worth a dime, and he dropped it into the cap.

"Thank you, sir," said the boy, respectfully.

The girl stood in the spot that she had been singing looking straight ahead, with so peculiar an expression that Duncan was struck by it. A man somewhat under the influence of liquor left the bar and approached her. He stopped and looked at her.

"You're a blamed purty gal. Blame me if I don't give yer a kiss," he said.

The girl shrank back with a look of alarm, and, putting out her hands in a strange way, began to feel the air like a blind person. The man made a grab at her, but the boy interfered.

"Leave my sister alone," he said.

"Eh? What's the matter with yer. I'm only goin' to kiss her."

He gave the boy a backhanded slap in the face that sent him spinning against the wall. Then he seized the girl and drew her toward him. She uttered a thrilling scream. Several men started up to interfere, but seemed afraid of the ruffian. Not so Duncan. With a bound he reached the man's side.

"Let go of her, you big loafer!" he cried.

With an imprecation the man made a lunge at him with his left arm. Duncan dodged the blow and struck the fellow a staggering blow in the jaw. Taking advantage of the chance he tore the girl away from the man's grasp and swung her around behind him.

"Look out! He's got a gun!" shouted out of those present, and immediately the spectators rose from their seats and began to scatter.

The young manager saw his danger. He sprang at the man, grabbed the wrist of the hand that held the weapon and shot his fist again at the man's jaw. The fellow saw the blow coming and tried to dodge. Duncan's fist instead of reaching his chin, as the boy intended, landed with crushing force on his nose, and the blood spouted.

"You infernal whelp, I'll kill you for that!" roared the scoundrel, swing his arm around in spite of Duncan's grip and firing.

The bullet missed the boy's head by a hair, and the flash almost blinded him. He aroused all his energies, and for the third time he struck out with all the force he was capable of. The blow took effect on the point of the fellow's chin, his head went back with a snap, and he dropped—knocked clean out.

CHAPTER XI.—Conclusion.

Duncan stooped and picked up the revolver. Shoving it in his pocket, he took the frightened girl by the arm, while her brother held her by the other and led her out of the saloon.

"Don't be frightened, miss," he said, reassuringly. "You are safe now. I will see you both down the street a bit."

"Brother, where are you?" said the girl, in fluttering accents.

"Here, Ruby."

"Who is this—"

"He's a big boy, and he saved you from that man. The fellow knocked me against the wall."

"He might have shot you," faltered the lovely creature.

"Well, if he had done so I would have suffered in a righteous cause."

"But it would have been terrible."

"As it didn't happen, don't worry about it."

"I shall never forget what you have done for me. What is your name?"

Duncan told her.

"And what is yours?" he said.

"Ruby Rand. My brother's name is Robert."

"Are you orphans and out in the world that you are trying to earn a living singing in saloons?"

"Yes," she said, sadly. "Our mother died a few months ago, and now we have only each other, and our home is a poor garret of two rooms on the east side of the Bronx."

"Suppose you let me help you both?"

"If you will we will be deeply grateful to you."

"I own a moving picture theatre on Black avenue. If you will consent to sing there at four shows a day, your brother accompanying you on the violin, I will give you a small salary, which I will increase if you are a success."

"Give me the address, and when we are to come, and we will be there."

"Here is my card. Can I depend on you?"

"You certainly can."

"Then be on hand at two in the afternoon. If you score a hit of any kind you had better move over near the theatre. I will see that you get respectable quarters for yourself and your brother."

And so they parted for the night, the brother and sister going toward their humble lodgings full of joy at the chance which seemed to be theirs, while Duncan believed he had secured an attraction within his means that would draw the people. Next morning, in addition to the regular motion picture bills was another announcing the appearance of a headline attraction in the person of Miss Ruby Rand, the sweetest singer in vaudeville, so Duncan put it. Promptly at two the blind girl and her brother appeared, and Duncan was waiting for them outside. He took them upstairs to a flat where he had arranged to have them change their clothes. At half-past two, when the three-reel subject was done, he led the girl to the piano and introduced her to the small audience present. Then the boy began the introductory, and presently the girl's voice was filling the room with the voice of an angel.

The applause was great, what it lacked in volume being made up in sincerity. Ruby sang a second song as an encore, and was applauded again. Then Duncan led them out to the little box office, where they remained till called to perform before the second show. A larger audience greeted them this time, for people had talked, and the girl's voice had reached the street and held a crowd there. Another crowd gathered outside, and a policeman coming along had to clear them away. Duncan took brother and sister to the restaurant, and they had supper with him.

"You have made a hit," said Duncan, "and I will engage you indefinitely at," here he mentioned the amount, which they thought was munificent.

"To-morrow you must come around early and we will look around for a small flat for you. Something cheap until you get more money. It will not do for you to go over to the Bronx late at night. This evening I will put you on at the beginning of the second show, so you can get away soon after nine."

The news of the wonderful singer at the Savoy was spread all around the district with astonishing celerity. Curiosity was aroused and a full house was present at seven. Spencer and Stacey both heard about her, and the furore she had aroused. How in thunder could the boy manager of the Savoy afford to hire such an attraction, which struck them from all reports as a high-priced vaudeville artist. He couldn't stand it for many days, they were sure. Every day was Sunday now with Duncan, and he was in high glee over the change in his luck. He sent word to Carter and Miss Leslie, and they came up to hear the singer.

"By George, that girl's a wonder! Where in thunder did you get her, and how can you afford to pay her salary?" asked Carter.

"What do you think she's worth?" asked Duncan.

"I'll bet Zammerstein or any other first-class vaudeville manager would give her \$1,500 a

week; perhaps more. This is no place for such a voice. How did you get her?"

"That's a secret. She is under indefinite contract with me," said Duncan.

"Indefinite! Say, don't give me such a steer, old man. Why, she would draw in any big house downtown."

"Carter, have you noticed she is blind?"

"Blind! Great Scott, no. You don't mean that."

"I do. Wait a moment, I'll introduce you and Miss Leslie."

Duncan went into the box office and brought Ruby out and introduced her to Miss Leslie and Carter. Then they saw she was blind, but her loveliness deeply impressed them both. That night the actress hardly slept. She saw in the blind girl a rival for Duncan's heart. Full houses was the rule now at the Savoy, and only the overflow went to the Criterion and the Crescent. The girl's fame filtered downtown, the newspapers heard of her, and her picture with a story given out by Duncan appeared in several of the papers. Then came agents one after another from theatrical agencies and from the big vaudeville managers offering her a salary that fairly dazzled her. A prominent vaudeville firm offered to take her on their circuit at \$1,500. Duncan could have made a fortune by letting the girl out with her brother. But he turned the offers down. And so Ruby wasted her sweetness on the cheap audiences, but she now only appeared at the evening shows, except on Saturday and Sunday. One day Spencer came to Duncan.

"Want to buy me out? I'll sell cheap. I want to get out of this infernal neighborhood and look after my other show downtown."

"No," said Duncan, "maybe your friend Stacey will accommodate you."

"Stacey be jiggered. He's got his hands full trying to keep his own joint going. You've knocked the ground from under us both with that blind girl. Who is she, anyway?"

"My mascot," said Duncan. "I told you that the Savoy would hit its gait some time, and that when it did the Criterion and the Crescent would get only what I couldn't accommodate. You see I was right, don't you? Well, I've hired the store next door, and will put in 200 more seats. I'm going to knock out my back wall and build a stage in the yard. I am angling for the store on the other side. If I get it I'll have a seating capacity of 800 when the alterations have been made."

"You can't knock out the wall. It's against the law."

"I have seen Mr. John Mason, head of the de-

partment. He has told me that I can have anything that I want within reason that he can assure me. What he says goes in the Department. He'll make it all right with any outside influence."

Two weeks later Duncan bought Spencer's seats at auction price. A week later still he bought Stacey out altogether and closed down the Savoy pending repairs. In due course the Savoy reopened with moving pictures, a vaudeville skit and Ruby Rand billed larger than ever. Did Duncan win Norma Leslie, or did he have a change of heart and marry his lovely blind mascot? Figure it out yourself. All I will say is that he made his mark running a moving picture show.

Next week's issue will contain "ED, THE OFFICE BOY; or, THE LAD BEHIND THE DEALS."

Send us a one-cent stamp to cover postage, and we will mail you a copy of "Moving Picture Stories."

HIGHEST ALTITUDE REACHED BY MAN

The London *Times* announces in its editorial columns that some of the members of the Mount Everest party have succeeded in reaching the highest altitude ever reached by man. It says:

"Three members of the Everest expedition, Mallory, Somerville and Norton, on May 21 reached an altitude of 26,800 feet, the highest ever reached by man, and just 2,200 feet below the summit."

"The news came in three messages which reached London recently from General Bruce commander of the expedition. On May 21 the three members named leaving the camp established on May 20 at 25,000 feet, climbed nearly 2,000 feet, and on the third day were back at what is known as Camp Three at Changtse, 21,000 feet above sea level and three miles northward of the summit of the peak."

"To have got so far in a climb which was merely a kind of preliminary reconnoissance is a very fine achievement and seems to augur well for the success of the final effort."

The *Times* notes that the point reached, which is about 2,200 feet below the summit, exceeds by almost the same margin the previous world's record of 24,533 feet by the Duke of the Abruzzi in 1910, and adds:

"The prospect of reaching the summit seems now much less a forlorn hope than it did."

CURRENT NEWS

ELEPHANTS TEST A FLOOR

Wishing to determine the strength of his garage floor, a Canton, O., man employed the services of five circus elephants to act as test load, relates *Popular Mechanics*. They were led upon the floor and grouped as closely as possible, making a live load of more than fifteen tons on the center of the floor, probably the first of this unusual description to be used for such a purpose.

WREN'S NEST IN POCKET

When George Creason of Pendleton, Ind., decided to remove a coat from a coal shed, where it had hung for several weeks, he found a wren had nested in one of the coat pockets and there were seven eggs in the nest. He carefully replied the coat and withdrew. Soon afterward he observed a wren sitting on the eggs. Mr. Creason visits the shed occasionally, but the bird seems unafraid, and several of his neighbors have seen the little wren and her coat-pocket nest.

AGED FARMER TRIES CIGARETTES

John Bloomfeiter, a farmer, ninety-two years old, who lives eight miles west of Corydon, Ind., sent his daughter the other day to buy him a package of cigarettes. He is an inveterate smoker, but says since he has lost his teeth he cannot hold the pipe in his mouth while he is plowing. Bloomfeiter has never smoked a cigarette, but he conceived the idea that he could smoke one while plowing much better than a pipe. He

fell three times yesterday while plowing, but was soon up and at it again.

OWL STOPPED ELECTRIC POWER

A large owl, with a steel trap dangling from one foot, perched on a high-tension wire near New Bedford, Mass., and that was why all Cape Cod below the canal was without electric power for more than four hours. The chain of the trap entwined about two wires, causing a short circuit, the discontinuation of electric service and the electrocution of the owl. The bird had a wing spread of more than four feet and was taken home by a lineman for mounting.

FAMOUS EIFFEL TOWER WHEEL IN PARIS COMING DOWN

Americans visiting Paris no longer will see the famous Ferris Wheel, which, with the Eiffel Tower, for twenty years has been one of the most familiar landmarks of the French capital.

Modern needs have decreed that the colossal wheel make way for a more profitable investment. Workmen are now dismantling the huge steel structure, the axle of which alone weighs 72,000 pounds and is set a distance of 164 feet from the ground.

Built in 1900, at the time of the Paris Exhibition, from the plans of an American engineer, whose name it bears, the gigantic wheel has offered pleasure and amusement to hundreds of thousands of Parisians and foreign visitors, young and old.

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Daring Dan Dobson

— OR —

THE BOY WHO BEAT THE MOONSHINERS

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER XVIII.—(Continued.)

"Look out for trouble, friend," whispered his host, who bore no grudge against him. "Watch them horses."

The judge stopped and examined his harness. He found the girths cut so that they would have worn and broken in a ride of a mile or two. The bridles were carefully cut through, so as to make the incision hardly apparent, and yet they would have yielded to a tug from a frightened horse.

Under the blankets, next the skins of the steeds, were burrs!

"Well, they are not letting anything go past them," said the judge, grimly. "Bring me some new harness. We'll start out with that much all right, anyway."

Outfitted fresh, at no small expense, they began their journey.

They went down the road toward the distant town where they could get the train for the East.

But they received a great surprise.

Two burly moonshiners, as they certainly looked to be, sat on a fence, with guns across their knees.

"Stop!"

One of the men cried out ominously.

"Whar ye goin'?" cried the other.

"Along this road," answered the judge.

"No man or woman can go along this road and live," said the first man. "Turn back, man, or your life'll pay for it."

They snapped back the hammers on their guns, and so villainous were their looks that the judge had no doubt whatever but that they would keep their words.

There was no alternative.

The judge and his daughter turned about, and tried another road leading from the little town.

A mile out they were met by three desperate-looking characters, who forbade their progress.

Back once more to try a third direction!

This, too, was blocked.

"There is some game here which I can not understand," said Judge Barton. "Evidently they want to coop me up in this place. We will try the fourth direction—back into the mountain country—and if that is open, we may ride in a detour and outwit them. But if not, we will stay here, my child, and send word for a rescue party. Money can get me out of this place as it can out of any other predicament in life."

But the judge was sadly mistaken.

There are places and times in life when very rich men learn that money in itself is in no sense the cure-all for everything!

The judge and his unfortunate daughter were surrounded by a unscrupulous gang of knaves, with the leadership of a rich and designing villain, in such a way that not even money could extricate them.

They were in a position where only one other thing could get them out of their terrible quandary.

That other thing is far better than money, or great holdings of railroad and mining stocks, jewels or worldly titles; it is known by the simple name of "bravery."

And that bravery was the greatest wealth of a young man, by name Dan Dobson, who was to re-enter their lives in a surprising way, to repay nobly the wrong which had been done him by the judge, not so long ago.

CHAPTER XIX.

Dan Dobson's Over-Effort.

The group of men waited impatiently in the shade of the grove, until the shadows of night should make reconnoitering more safe.

It was a tremendous risk at that.

"Ye had better let me an' one of the other men go, Dan," advised Zachary Shank. "They wouldn't recognize us, while it would be shore death for you and Dingle to have yer faces seen by these rascals."

But Daring Dan would not agree.

Not in his nature was the desire to let others take dangers which he himself would evade.

"Not by a long shot, Zach," he retorted. "Tom and I know these men better, and, anyway, they will be suspicious when they see strange faces."

"And they're bound to see 'em before long—if you all are going to do anythin'," chimed in Tom.

So it was that the two stealthily picked their progress from one tree to another, creeping like warpath Sioux from the shelter of one bush to a clump of rocks, then to the hiding protection of a mass of rocks.

Their supporters were to close in upon the farmhouse headquarters as soon as any shooting started, or, in case of a peaceful conquest, at the whistle of a certain run of notes which Tom planned.

At last they reached the side of the house, and peered into the windows.

Then they beheld the old woman serving some food to four of the moonshiners, and as the window was open, they worked their way near enough to the portal to hear what the rascals were saying.

The conversation came to them in bits like this:

"Jake will be here in about two hours, I reckon, Hank, unless the judge gives 'im too much trouble."

(To be continued.)

Send us a one-cent stamp to cover postage, and we will mail you a copy of "Moving Picture Stories."

ITEMS OF INTEREST

PLANS TO CATCH RATS

The rat may soon meet its fate as does the fly — on sticky paper. Plans to "tanglefoot" rodents are being worked out in Albuquerque, N. M., by the Biological Survey Bureau. Experimenters hope to exterminate the pests with "rat glue." The rats, when they try to track across the glue, are held as fast as if they were trapped.

CRIPPLE ACCUMULATES FORTUNE

Oscar M. Schierer, fifty-five years of age, who died in Allentown, Pa., the other day, leaves an estate of \$50,000, accumulated through his efforts in business during the last forty years, despite the fact that during the entire time he was unable to move from his chair. Schierer, crippled from rheumatism, conducted his business and built it up to a prosperous condition, notwithstanding the handicap of his infirmity.

HUNG BY WOODEN LEG

A party of bear hunters found the body of William Cubec, a hunter and trapper of Crane, Wis., hanging by a wooden leg from a tree twenty feet from the ground. Cubec had disappeared more than a month before. Evidently he had climbed into the tree to dislodge a coon which had a nest among the upper branches, had lost his balance and fallen, his wooden leg becoming entangled in such a way that he could not get himself free.

BANKRUPT TOWN SOLD

The sale of a town was contained in a Federal Court order recently when Judge W. B. Sheppard consented to the acceptance of the \$6,500 bid of F. G. Plu of Chicago for the assets of the town of Valparaiso, which has been in litigation for some time. There were two bids, the one coming from an association of realty holders, who were unable to present before bank closing hour the required certified check for \$5,000. The other bid was in cash. The bankrupt town is in the southern part of Okaloosa County, Florida.

NOVEL LIGHTHOUSE CONSTRUCTION

A combined lighthouse, dwelling and fog-signal room for Fairport, Ohio, on Lake Erie, marks a new method of erecting for exposed locations. The shell of the building was fabricated, riveted and bolted permanently together ashore; without interior mason work or lantern it was 28 feet square with a 38½-foot tower at one corner, and it weighed 65 tons. It was moved on the deck of a small steamer 147 miles up the lake to its location, at a transportation cost of \$1,500. The plan is estimated to have saved about \$10,000.

AREAS OF OUR NATIONAL PARKS

Yellowstone, 3,348 square miles, 1872, Northwestern Wyoming.

Mount McKinley, 2,200 square miles, 1917, South Central Alaska.

Glacier, 1,534 square miles, 1910, Northwestern Montana.

Yosemite, 1,125 square miles, 1890, Middle Eastern California.

Grand Canyon, 958 square miles, 1919, Arizona.

Rocky Mountain, 398 square miles, 1915, North Middle Colorado.

Sequoia, 252 square miles, Middle Eastern California.

Crater Lake, 249 square miles, 1902, Southwestern Oregon.

Lassen Volcanic, 124 square miles, 1915, Northern California.

Hawaii, 118 square miles, 1916, Hawaiian Islands.

Mesa Verde, 77 square miles, 1906, Southwestern Colorado.

Zion, 30 square miles, 1919, Utah.

Wind Cave, 17 square miles, 1903, South Dakota.

Lafayette, 8 square miles, 1919, Maine Coast.

General Grant, 4 square miles, 1890, Middle Eastern California.

Hot Springs, 1½ square miles, 1832, Middle Arkansas.

Platt, 11-3 square miles, 1904, Southern Oklahoma.

Sully's Hill, 11-5 square miles, 1904, North Dakota.

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A Combat In The Dark

By KIT CLYDE

I was living in Calcutta at the time, says a writer, and was the one American in a firm of Englishmen who were going business with the interior on quite an extensive scale. Twice a year for several years in succession, I went on Long journeys which took me several hundred miles inland, and often into very wild portions of the country, but after the first two or three trips I became so accustomed to the people with whom I had to deal and the roads I had to traverse that I lost all fear of either.

I would scarcely take the pains to go armed. Indeed, on one of my trips I made the entire round with not even a pistol, but the other members of the firm objected to what they considered a needless exposure of my life. After that I carried a pair of 45-caliber pistols at my saddle, but I really had not the slightest expectation of ever using them.

I had been riding all day among a ridge that ran like a backbone from near the coast to a good many miles up in the country. I had overtaken an acquaintance along in the afternoon and we journeyed on very pleasantly together for several hours. Toward sunset we noticed that all the sky was getting lighted up with a great jungle fire off to our right, but that was a matter of too common occurrence to bear more than a passing comment. We would not have mentioned it at all, probably, but for two or three small wild animals that ran across our path, driven out their dens in the jungle by the fire.

"By the way, where will you pass the night?" my companion asked me, as the brief Indian twilight began to descend. I mentioned the name of a curious old Scotch hermit, McGowan his name was, who lived a little way off the main road, and whom I had visited before; but my companion declared that he must positively reach the next town that night. He urged me to go with him, but the next town was five miles further on, and I was desperately tired. Besides, I wanted to see old McGowan. So at the turn of the road I reluctantly bade my friend adieu and rode off my own way.

Never in all my experience of the country had the twilight seemed quite so brief. Before I could think, almost, it was dark, and the red glare of the jungle fire in the sky, away to the east, only served to make the darkness more confusing. The consequence was that in about ten minutes I was lost. I concluded that I had turned off from the main road too soon. Then I tried to go back and start over again, and I couldn't find the main road. It is needless to say that I grew more and more confused, and that in a very short time that fire even had skipped around, and was in an entirely different quarter, and that the very stars had changed positions, and were not to be relied on in the least.

And then all at once, in some unexpected way, I came up with McGowan's house. I was so overjoyed that I sent a cheery "Hello!" on before me

by way of greeting, but nothing but the echoes answered it. My horse snorted and was extremely restless and uneasy, but I took his saddle off and turned him into the little inclosure, as I had done on former occasions, and going up to the door I gave a loud knock. No answer. It began to be evident that for once the old man was away from home.

Still, I could go no further that night. I must try to get in somehow. And so I turned the knob, but finding the door locked was about to give up, when my hand accidentally touched the key. The door had been locked on the outside. I was certain then that McGowan could not be far away, and that he would be back presently; so I unlocked the door and went in without further ceremony, closing the door after me, and throwing my saddle down beside it, with my pistols still in the holsters.

I had been sitting there as much as twenty minutes, I should think, when I was startled by a sound that, faint as it was, made me jump as though it had been a thunder-clap. It was only the moving of a chair over on the other side of the room. It rattled so slightly, but of course I knew that it did not move by itself.

"Hello, McGowan!" I exclaimed, turning in the direction of the sound. "Is that you, after all? Didn't you hear me calling you when I came in?" There was no answer, and everything was deadly still. For several minutes I almost held my breath, listening. It was not that I heard anything. I felt, rather, that I was not alone in the room. And when, presently, I heard a soft footfall, my heart jumped into my mouth. I was worse frightened than I had been in all my life. I was in the dark, locked in with somebody or something; a terrible ghostly presence that filled me with dread.

If I could only have reached my pistols,—but they were in the saddle holsters, over by the door, and that footfall had sounded in that direction. I stood perfectly still, drawn up against the wall, afraid to move hand or foot. I had turned cold, and was in the most utterly helpless condition that had ever come upon me in all my life. Listening intently as I was, my senses were quickened until I could hear sounds that would have made no impression on me under ordinary circumstances. In a little while I heard that stealthy step only a little distance away, between me and the corner of the room. Hurriedly I stole away, involuntarily tiptoeing and trying to be as stealthy as my enemy. And, feeling my way thus about the room, I put my hand on another table, and there my fingers fell upon a match.

It may be imagined how I grasped it, and with what care I struck it, and when it was once fairly burning I raised it up and looked across the room to where—heaven and earth—the match fell from my hand and went out, leaving me in the dark with the largest Bengal tiger I had ever seen!

My heart beat so loudly I could hear it distinctly, and for a little while it was the only sound in the room. Then the stealthy gliding and grim pursuit began again, and here and there I went, always trying to keep as far as possible from the terrible creature that was circling around the room. My condition was such a des-

perate one that I did not even think of any hope of escaping. I had even forgotten all about my pistols until, happening to touch the saddle with my foot, I remembered them. Hastily stooping, I snatched one of the pistols from the holster. A deep growl greeted the movement, and a sound followed that made me think the animal was preparing to spring. I braced myself against the wall, held my pistol ready and waited.

But the shock did not come. I was to endure the agony of suspense still longer. Again the gliding motion began, signaled by soft footfalls, or by here and there the slight moving of a chair, as the tiger touched it in passing. This kept up until I felt that it would be utterly impossible to endure it longer. I was a good shot, and what is better, a quick one. I resolved to fire the pistol into the room, and, having located the tiger by the first flash, to give him the benefit of the other barrels. It was a desperate chance, but if ever a man was justified in taking desperate chances I was at that time. I was near the corner of the room.

I got up into the corner and braced myself against the two walls and fired. The flash showed me the tiger almost in the middle of the room, with body lowered and cruel head nearly touching the floor. I never will forget the picture photographed in my mind by that one flash of light. Before one could think, almost, I had followed that first shot with two others, directed straight at that terrible creature in the middle of the room; but then the tiger sprang upon me, bearing me to the floor as though I had been a baby, and crushing my left shoulder and arm with its terrible teeth. But even as I fell I had presence of mind enough to empty the pistol into its body as it crouched upon me. And by some fortunate chance one of those shots struck some vital part, and with a savage cry the tiger rolled away from me.

I did not wait to see about it. My long suspense and the agony of my broken shoulder were too much for me, and I went into a swoon. When I awoke to consciousness the room was full of people—McGowan and the man who had traveled with me and a crowd of men from the next town—and the great tiger lay stretched upon the floor in a pool of blood.

"What did you mean by it?" said old McGowan, when my wounds had been attended to. "The fire drove the beast out o' the jungle, so when I came in from work and found him in my house I locked him in there and went for help. What call did you have to lock yourself up with a tiger, eh?"

But, all the same, the tiger was dead, even if I had fought my fight in the dark, and even though I was not a hunter at all, and was not hunting tigers that evening, anyway.

Battle With Apes

The patrons of the Wigwam Theatre witnessed an exciting battle in San Francisco some years ago, and it was not down on the programme. It was a fight in which a man and woman did battle for their lives against a couple of monster apes, and it was only by the courage and presence

of mind of some ten attaches of the theatre that the enraged brutes were prevented from killing both people.

Part of the evening's entertainment was furnished by Professor Samwells' troupe of trained animals, consisting of goats, dogs, cats and five large apes. Samwells handled the animals himself while on the stage; his wife and their assistants remained in the wings, ready to take charge of the animals as they went off the stage.

The monkeys were kept in a large cage, and this had always been looked after by Mrs. Samwells, she taking the animals out and returning them to the cage when her husband was through with them. During the last part of the performance the largest ape was dressed like a lady, and rode about the stage in a little phaeton drawn by one of the dogs.

When the ape was sent on the stage by Mrs. Samwells it was rather sullen, and at first refused to get into the vehicle. It showed its teeth every time its master approached, but was at last induced to take its seat in the phaeton.

The professor patted it on the head and then stooped to adjust the harness on the canine steed. Then quick as a flash the cunning brute sprang from the vehicle and fastened its long tusks in his wrist, driving them clear to the bone. In an instant the house was in an uproar, women screamed, and strong men turned their heads aside as the maddened brute bit and tore at the man's arm, while his screams for help ran through the building.

"Grace, Grace, take him off; he is killing me," shouted Samwells to his wife. Mrs. Samwells, who was holding another huge ape in her arms, threw the animal from her and rushed on the stage to her husband's assistance. She seized the big ape by the throat and tried with all her strength to choke the beast in order to open its jaws, but she might as well have tried to strangle a Bengal tiger.

She then did what few men would have done, thrust her hand into the brute's mouth and by a superhuman effort wrenched the terrible jaws apart. It was just at this instant that the ape which Mrs. Samwells had left in the wing sprang on the stage, as if to the assistance of its comrade. There was a cry of "look out for the other one," and the next instant the newcomer had seized the woman by the left hand and driven his sharp teeth clear through it. Samwells, now free from the grasp of the first monster, rushed to aid his wife, but could render but little assistance, as both his hands were almost torn to pieces.

At this moment several men rushed on the stage and the fierce brutes were beaten into insensibility with clubs and pieces of board torn from the scenery. The victims were carried from the stage, and as soon as the patrol wagon arrived were taken to the Receiving Hospital.

Dr. Simpson, who was in attendance, found that the man's left thumb was almost torn from the hand. The tendons were completely severed, and there were a dozen wounds, reaching from the tips of the fingers far up on the wrist. The wounds made by the animal's teeth looked as if they had been inflicted by a tiger, so badly was the appearance of the wounds.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

NEW YORK, JULY 7, 1922

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

FLOWERS IN A BLOCK OF ICE

A wreath of Australian flowers, placed on the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London, by the Australian prime minister, made the long journey in a block of ice, and were quite fresh for the ceremony.

A RECORD TRAIN?

A train drawn by a single engine recently brought 165,000 bushels of grain over the Canadian Pacific lines. The train was 0.9 miles long, consisting of 110 loaded cars, a water car, and a caboose. The gross weight was 686,000 tons.

HOUR GLASS AGAIN IN USE

A miniature "hour glass" is now being used to time the telephone conversation, according to the *Scientific American*. Its upper compartment exhausts itself of sand in just three minutes. With one eye on the glass the telephone user sees when the time is almost up.

OWLET IN FLUE

There was a double surprise when the family of Ruben Maslansky of No. 123 Eleventh Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minn., early the other morning sought to discover why the chimney was clogged. When the fire in the heater had been put out, the family was astonished to see a young owl, still alive, drop out of the chimney. The owl was equally astonished. It is believed the owl roosted on the top of the chimney and being overcome by cold and smoke, dropped down the sooty flue.

RAINCOAT SAVES HER LIFE

Mrs. Mary Alexander, fifty, of Rochester, N. Y., owes her life, police say, to a silk waist and heavy raincoat, which she wore last night when she attempted suicide by drowning in Lake Ontario. Mrs. Alexander told physicians in a local hospital, where she was taken after her rescue by members of the local coast guard station, that she was despondent because of ill health.

The raincoat and waist puffed out like a balloon and kept the woman afloat, her rescuers say.

MONEY IN DESERTED CAVE

The attraction of cave life for Lincoln, Neb., boys has been vastly multiplied in the last twenty-four hours. There are dozens of these caves in the city environs. One of them is located in the southwest section. Three twelve-year-old boys living in the neighborhood concluded to explore it. Far within the entrance one of them picked up a roll of bills held together by a rubber band. When counted the total was found to be \$1,250.

They reported their find to the police, and it was identified as the savings of Henry School, which he kept in a suitcase in his home. The suitcase was found in an adjoining cave. The police theory is that it was taken by somebody who knew where Henry kept his money, and that being a novice he got frightened and threw it away. School lives about three blocks distant from the cave.

LAUGHS

"This is the third time you have been here for food," said the woman at the kitchen door to the tramp. "Are you always out of work?" "Yes'm," replied the itinerant. "I guess I was born under a lucky star."

"When Willie Tuffin called you a hypocrite and a thief, did you remember that a soft answer turneth away wrath?" "Yes, father." "And what did you say to him?" "Nothing. I threw a rotten apple at him."

"Did you ever tell that young man that late hours were bad for one?" asked the father at the breakfast table. "Well, father," replied the wise daughter, "late hours may be bad for one, but they're all right for two."

"Yes, sirree," said the autoist proudly, "I haven't paid a cent for repairs on my machine all the ten months I've had it." "So I've heard," replied his friend. "The man who did the repairs told me the very same thing."

"Say, Pa, what is the difference between a visit and a visitation?" Fond Parent—A visit, my boy, is when you go to see your Grandmother Jones, and a visitation is when your Grandmother Jones comes to see us.

"What is this initiative and referendum?" "It's this way: If I want to go anywhere or do anything I take the initiative by mentioning it to my wife. Then she decides whether I can go or not. That's the referendum."

Mrs. De Fashion—My daughter has fainting spells, and our doctor is unable to stop them, so I have come to engage your services. Professor Shassai (dancing master)—Vat you vish off me, madam? Mrs. De Fashion—I thought you might perhaps teach her to faint more gracefully.

Send us a one-cent stamp to cover postage, and we will mail you a copy of "Moving Picture Stories."

FROM ALL POINTS

DOG RETURNS SPECTACLES

An Airdale dog which retrieves lost spectacles is the pride of the family of J. Meam Wingerd, Franklin County, Pa., farmer and churchman. Miss Ruth Wingerd lost her spectacles while walking about the farmlands. While Miss Wingerd recounted her loss, the dog left the house and twenty minutes later returned with the spectacles between his teeth.

COLT'S-FOOT FOR SMOKERS

A French physician, Dr. Ambial, told a medical association that all innocuous effects of tobacco smoking may be prevented by adding to the tobacco the stamens of the little plant known as "colt's-foot." Dr. Ambial declares that he can smoke thirty cigarettes a day of this mixture without inconvenience. The only change noticeable in the tobacco, which retains its aroma perfectly, is that it seems to acquire some resemblance to Oriental tobacco.

HANDSHAKING RUINS NERVE

After his handshaking tour of Canada, the Prince of Wales could scarcely move his arm for days. A health expert tells the *Scientific American* that the American custom of handshaking contributed toward the deaths of Roosevelt and Caruso and is responsible in part for Woodrow Wilson's ill health. "It breaks down the nerve system and invites disease," he says.

WEDDING RING ON FIRST FINGER

At one time, many years ago, the wedding ring was worn on the first finger. People who have seen the old pictures of the Madonna in Rome will remember that in one or two of them there is a glistening ring on the forefinger of her right hand, but with Christianity came the wearing of the wedding ring on the third finger rather than the first. The old story of there being a vein that runs from that finger to the heart is nonsense. Its use originated in this way: The priest first put it on the thumb, saying: "In the name of the Father"; next on the second finger, repeating: "In the name of the Holy Ghost," and on the third finger, ending with "Amen," and there it was allowed to remain.

THE CANARY

The canary bird, which belongs to the finch species, is a native of the Canary and Cape Verde Islands and Madeira. But for some hundreds of years it has been bred in practically all of the civilized countries. The wonderful singing of these birds was the means of having them transported in captivity to Europe in the latter part of the fifteenth or early in the sixteenth century, and ever since then they have been bred extensively outside of their natural environment. The most famous singing canaries to-day are the ones bred by the natives of the Harz Mountains in Germany, while the best singers are the Saint Andreasbergs. The choicest of these are known as "Campaninis," and command almost fabulous prices.

PARIS POPULATION TO REACH 6,000,000

The new plans for increasing the rank of Paris among the world's greatest cities are taking definite form through the proposal of several City Councilors this week to take in the suburbs in all directions, which will bring up the total population to more than 4,500,000. Under last year's census Paris had only 8,900,000, but 1,500,000 people can be found in the small towns which, although they have their own officials, do not have any line separating them from the capital.

If the extra suburbs are included, according to the city's statisticians, Paris easily will reach 6,000,000. Naturally this increase would mean a great revision of the city's rail and water traffic. Already Councilor Le Marchand is proposing that the city advance 2,000,000,000 francs for the construction of a great interior port system destined to make the French capital as great an interior water traffic center as Cleveland or Chicago. The plans include the deepening of the Seine between Paris and Havre and an additional widening of twenty feet to permit the passage of large cargo boats instead of the present tug and barge system.

MANY GAME BIRDS BROUGHT FROM ORIENT

Hundreds of Oriental game birds from China and Mongolia were included in the cargo of the Eldridge when she docked at Seattle, Wash. The birds and a rare mountain sheep were brought here for the Department of Game of this State.

An absolutely new bird is the bamboo partridge, of which 500 were shipped. It is from the marshes of China and these will be turned loose in the Puget Sound district. It is larger than the "Bob White" and smaller than the Hungarian partridge, but is very fast on the wing. They possess brilliant coloring. About 250 Chinese pheasants of several strains from the northern and colder parts of China were in the shipment. Twenty-five pairs of spectacle ducks and mandarin ducks were brought. These will be taken to the game farm at Walla Walla and more propagated. They are beautiful ducks and are expected to do well in the lakes and waterways of the Northwest.

The shipment included a Thibet ram from the borderland of Mongolia and China. It lives at an elevation of 12,000 feet and is one of three in captivity. The other two are in London. The State Game Department hopes to secure a female.

For the Seattle Zoo 200 canaries were brought and a large number of reed birds or tiny grosbeaks. Among the bird cargo for the Park Department were three white Japanese storks. These very grave looking birds will live in a beautiful fairyland of rustic bridges and cobble temples in Woodland Park. The stork exhibit is the work of several Japanese mechanics and is the facsimile of famous Oriental gardens.

Send us a one-cent stamp to cover postage, and we will mail you a copy of "Mystery Magazine."

GOOD READING

FIND \$100,000 IN COUNTERFEIT U. S. BILLS
ON CANADIAN ISLAND

Royal Canadian Mounted Police raided a farmhouse on St. Theresa Island and seized nearly \$100,000 worth of forged United States Federal Reserve Bank notes. Philip Briere, alias Desrocher, and Alfred Jean were arrested. A large modern printing press was discovered. The bills were clever imitations of American currency, officials said.

SAVED DOG FROM MINE

Joseph Lamon, ten years old, of Tresekow, Pa., the other day was lowered by a chain into a mine cave 100 feet deep and rescued a hound belonging to Tony Garrot. The dog accidentally fell into the hole several days ago, and its predicament was noticed by idle miners, who suggested that it be shot to relieve it of its misery. Lemon offered to bring the animal out and did so.

AMPUTATES AN EXTRA HEAD

A report is being made to the Belgian Academy of Medicine of a remarkable surgical operation performed recently by Chief Surgeon Gitnolla at the Jumet Hospital in the village of Tergnier, when an abnormal secondary head on a boy born a week ago was successfully amputated. The remaining head of the boy is normal. The one removed was larger and malformed.

THE ALPS YIELD UP THE DEAD

The glaciers and snow fields melted so much during the long hot summer of 1921 that many long-lost bodies were found. One was that of a guide lost 18 years ago; another, a Swiss school teacher who disappeared in 1914; and inasmuch as the winter just past has been mild, it seems that many more bodies will be recovered this summer. It is hoped that the remains of Lord Frederick Douglas, killed during Whymper's ascent of the Matterhorn in 1865, may be found. Ice surpasses embalming, and if we could get to the bottom of the Arctic ice we might learn what men were like 50,000 years ago.

\$1,600 IN POCKET, OFFERS COP \$50 TO
KILL HIM

William Vergo, who says he is a laborer, no home, stepped up to a man at Fifth avenue and Thirty-fifth street, New York City, the other night and said:

"Give me a gun; I want to shoot myself!"

The man grabbed Vergo and walked him to Thirty-fourth street and handed him over to Patrolman Whittaker of the West Thirtieth street station.

"Let me have your gun a minute," said Vergo. "I want to kill myself."

The policeman refused and Vergo offered him \$10 to shoot him. He raised the offer to \$50, and then Whittaker took him to the police station, where he boosted his offer to \$100. Dr. Barnett, from New York Hospital, sent him to Bellevue for observation.

Vergo said he had a room, but had forgotten

where. He had \$1,600 in cash, which he said he had drawn from the bank to send to his mother in Hungary.

ITALIANS FIGHT A DUEL

There was a duel at Palermo recently between two of the eminent men of Sicily and conducted according to the most approved traditions. The combatants were Chevalier Giuseppe di Scalea, brother of the Minister of War and Mayor of Palermo, and Prof. Empedo de Restivo, President of the Palermo Chamber of Commerce.

Its origin was in the visit of the King a few days ago to lay the corner-stone of the new port of Palermo. The Mayor invited all the leading men of the city to the ceremony and to the official reception to the King, but for some unexplained reason omitted the President of the Chamber of Commerce, although this body had taken a leading part and is deeply interested in the new port works.

Prof. Restivo, offended by the omission of his name from the list of invited guests, wrote a savage letter to Chevalier di Scalea, the Mayor. The latter, instead of apologizing or explaining sent Gen. di Giorgis and the Duke of Camastra to Prof. Restivo with a challenge to fight. This was promptly accepted and Restivo named as his seconds Baron Pascamo and Chevalier Borazzo.

All preliminaries having been arranged and swords selected as the weapons, the Mayor and the President of the Chamber of Commerce met recently in the garden of a private house in Via Libertà. The fight was refereed by Gen. di Giorgio and Baron Pascamo. In the second assault, the Mayor lightly wounded his rival's right arm, but it was only a scratch, and the duel went on. In the third assault Prof. Restivo punctured Mayor di Scalea's arm. The referees decided that this wound was sufficiently severe to put him at a disadvantage and therefore ordered that the duel cease.

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FINDS OUR STAMP FAULTY

Criticism of the methods of printing United States stamps has been voiced by Fred J. Melville, one of England's leading postage stamp authorities, in connection with the recent discovery of the forgeries of the two-cent red issue.

These forgeries were detected quickly, and it is doubtful that any were used for letter postage.

"Most collectors," says Mr. Melville, "have noticed the wide variations in the United States stamps of recent years, due to the experimenting at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing with new processes of printing. Stamps and denomination have been printed from finely engraved steel plates, from rotary recess plates, from surface printing plates and by the offset method, and these have been in circulation simultaneously. The different qualities of impression make them all look different, and this is a dangerous state of affairs in a country whose stamps are being used to the extent of millions every day.

"Where the genuine stamps vary so much it is difficult to detect, or even suspect, a forgery, and it is not surprising that some one has taken advantage of the recent confusion in stamp printing in the United States."

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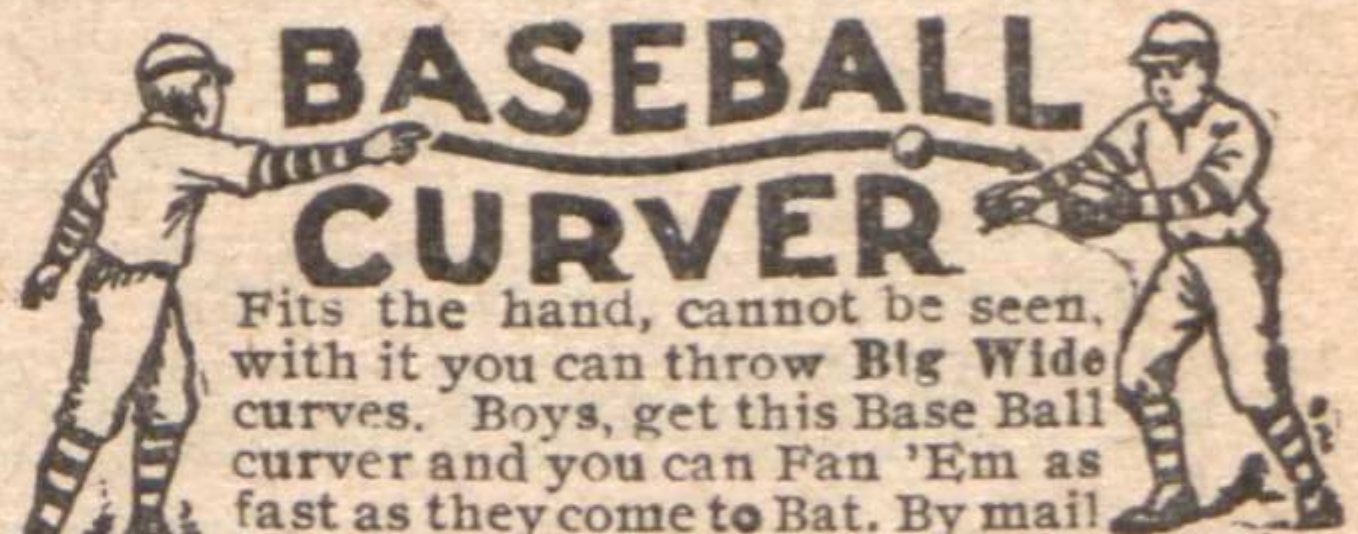
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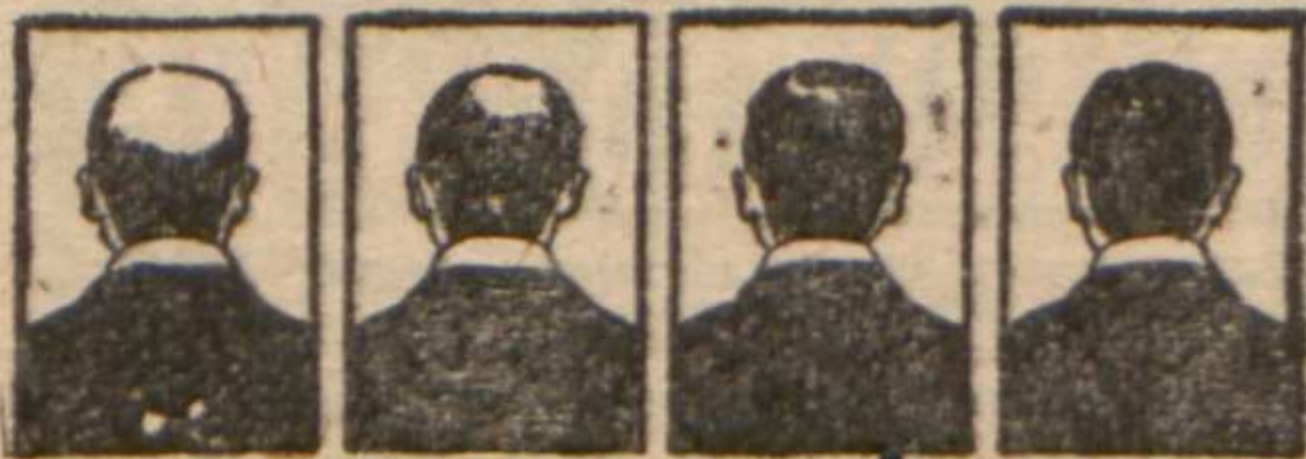
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BLACK SHEEP

The appearance of black lambs in a flock made up entirely of white sheep has been for ages and is still a cause for wonder and the basis of superstitions. But the study of the laws of breeding and heredity has explained the reasons for the sporadic appearance of these off color lambs.

Feeding and management of sheep have nothing to do with the appearance of black lambs. The black color is hereditary even though it may be transmitted by ordinary white sheep. The black color in such a case is what is called a recessive character. White sheep which transmit this character at all transmit black in 50 per cent. of their reproductive cells and white in the remaining 50 per cent. Thus, such white sheep mated with blacks—which can only transmit black—produce 60 per cent. black lambs and 50 per cent. white. All of these white lambs can transmit black.

White sheep which transmit only white, mated with blacks, produce only white lambs, but all of these lambs can transmit black.

"BOTTLED SUNSHINE"

"Bottled Sunshine" or "Hehos," as it is labelled in drug stores in Paris, is getting its inventor into trouble with the police. An old man, who puts his new product on the market with the claim that it is a cure for tuberculosis and other ills, says he discovered a means of extracting fluid from the sun when as a post-office clerk he accompanied an official mission to Central Africa.

He has no degree, and, as he neglected to state the composition of his medicine on the label, he is accused of violating the law regulating the sale of patent medicines. A magistrate accompanied by a professor from a school of pharmacy instructed to investigate the matter found the inventor living in a shanty outside of Auteuil.

From an iron and rod on the roof a number of wires ran into two huge receivers in the courtyard, the whole stallation looking like an electric plant. The receivers were filled with a syrup which the old man claimed was extract of sun. He talks seriously about it and says also that he has discovered a method of transmutation of metals.



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